THE

THEATRICAL INQUISITOR;

FOR

FEBRUARY, 1820.

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LONDON:

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TO WHOM ALL COMMUNICATIONS, POSTAGE PAID, ARE TO BE ADDRESSED.

NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

*** Our SUPPLEMENTAL NUMBER, completing the Fifteenth Volume, is just published, and may be had of all booksellers. We recommend it to our readers with confidence, as presenting a record of many subjects they must wish to preserve.

We beg our valued correspondent, J. B. B, to believe that nothing can be farther from our feelings than the semblance of inattention, or disrespect. The alterations he alludes to have never been made without a conviction of their necessity, and this cause, we trust, will again apologize for our dissent from his proposal. We stand here, not only to expose malevolence, but to rectify mistake, and from that office we cannot recede, without relinquishing our duties altogether.

QUEME has not answered our recent suggestion. We are sorry for it, but still entertain an expectation of being duly favoured.

Why has J. A. withdrawn his notices of the Edinburgh Theatricals? We received them with unqualified pleasure, and shall be glad to see that our readers can be gratified by their resumption.

Our *Dublin Correspondent* has deserted us, without experiencing the slightest neglect, or assigning the most distant reason. We should gladly hail a continuance of his strictures, but if that cannot be accomplished, shall open a fresh avenue of communication.

A *Townsman* has our thanks for his recurrence, and we wish to depend upon his regularity.

Mr. J. G. GRANT must be fully aware that necessity alone could induce us to postpone the communication we have so anxiously solicited. It shall appear, without fail, in our next.

To the suggestion of Miss REDE we yield our cheerful compliance, and only lament that a more important token of "consideration and liberality," is not to be accorded. An answer is left at the Publisher's.

The "Elegiac Lines," by an *Old Officer*, are worthy of attention, though unsuited to *our* pages; and we therefore decline them with thanks for their polite communication.

We have kept back the letter of W. F. D. in compliance with Mr. WILKS's solicitation, and if he will send to our office it will be duly returned. We shall pay it proper attention at any other opportunity, our own sentiments never being suffered to interfere with the appearance of inimical opinions. We dissent, or acquiesce, as circumstances may dictate, but scorn the idea of suppression.

The "Lines," already alluded to, by J. R. P. are unavoidably delayed. We have too much reliance on his candour to couple this avowal with the empty compliment, by which some minds can alone be propitiated.

A packet is left for JAMES, whose "Sonnet," shall speedily have insertion.

It is with exceeding regret that we still postpone our remarks upon the Minor Theatres, among which the Surrey is at this moment enriched with entertainments that tend, in even more than an ordinary manner, to promote the public delight. Mr. RAE's lamented illness deprived the east London, for some time past, of its prominent attraction, the return of which we shall be happy to hail with his recovery. The Coburg is closed till Easter, and the Adelphi we shall duly notice in our next, remarking in the meantime, that a gentleman named WILLIS has made his debut in the romance of "Ivanhoe," with ample promise that his powers are in the right path to pre-eminent reputation.

TO COUNTRY BOOKSELLERS.—This work will be sent, by a reference to the collector, *on sale or return*.

HEWIT, Printer, 145, High Holborn.

Painted by J. Boaden. Engraved by Chas. Picart.

Mr. Kemble, as Hotspur.

In Henry the Fourth.

Engraved for the Theatrical Inquisitor.

Published March 1st 1820 for the Proprietors by C. Chapple Pall Mall.

THE

THEATRICAL INQUISITOR;

FOR

FEBRUARY, 1820.

Memoir of Mr. Kemble.

Master of thy great art!—MASSINGER.

IT has been remarked by one of the critics upon this gentleman's career, that just about the period when GARRICK retreated from the public scene, it seemed as if Nature had taken the stage under her immediate protection, by endeavouring to atone for the loss it had recently suffered. In the year 1776, Mr. JOHN PHILIP KEMBLE made his first essay in the theatrical world, at Wolverhampton, about the period when his great predecessor departed, and gave an earnest at once of his future pre-eminence in pursuit of that peculiar distinction he was so amply qualified to attain.

After a short provincial career, he made his first appearance at Hull, in the character of *Macbeth*, on Friday, October 30, 1778, and for his ensuing assumption selected the part of *Archer*. In the course of that season he acted *Lord Aimworth*, in BICKERSTAFF'S "Maid of the Mill," by omitting the songs, but that barbarous mutilation, it must be added, was undertaken for the benefit of a brother comedian.

In this year, on Tuesday, December the 29th, Mr. KEMBLE produced his tragedy of "Belisarius," which the Manager under whose auspices it was prepared, has himself assured us obtained unqualified applause. On the 19th of January, 1779, he made his début upon the York boards, in the part of *Orestes*, and though impeded by the fair claims of prescriptive favourites, soon established his pretensions to decided superiority.

Here Mr. KEMBLE's literary labours were again evinced by the representation of a farce from his pen, for the benefit of Mrs.

HUNTER. It does not appear to have been particularly successful, and though revived at Drury-lane, with important alterations, has not hitherto been printed. In addition to the celebrity acquired by these efforts as an author, Mr. KEMBLE sustained the honours of gentlemanly independence in a most laudable manner, upon the following occasion.

The tragedy of "Zenobia" had been selected for performance, on Thursday the 15th of April, to exhibit the powers of a Mrs. MASON in the duties of its heroine; on the night of this eventful occurrence, a lady of distinction was present, who with her party possessed the stage-box, and having imbibed an instinctive aversion to the new candidate for Thespian laurels, began to talk and laugh upon conversational topics with obtrusive impropriety. From some unaccountable cause, this judicious female had also adopted an opinion to the prejudice of Mr. KEMBLE, who acted *Teribazus*, so that, in the last act, when he and Mrs. MASON, were deeply employed in the agonizing scenes of death, their splenetic observer, to satisfy her satirical vein, gave such vent to the impetuosity of her spirits, that, like *Lady Townley*, she chatted "louder than the players," and held them up, by this treatment, as fit examples for general indignity. Being not a little nettled at this remarkable rudeness, Mr. KEMBLE threw the fiercest glances of disdain at this illiberal opponent, who returned his looks with reiterated bursts of contemptuous laughter. On the repetition of such outrageous behaviour, Mr. KEMBLE made a long pause, and when at last excited by the audience to go on, with great gravity and a pointed bow to the stage-box, said he should be ready to proceed with the play, whenever *that* lady had concluded her discourse. This observation aroused the audience from their stupor, and the lady stung almost to madness by this imputed insult, was hissed by many voices, and commanded to withdraw. She obeyed this direction, with revengeful alacrity, and having summoned some officers of the County Militia to her relief, dispatched them in a body to the Manager's habitation, where they tumultuously demanded Mr. KEMBLE's attendance. Here Mr. WILKINSON intreated them to consider that the education and principles of Mr. KEMBLE were such as would neither suffer him to overlook an insult, nor endure it; he then fetched him from the adjoining Theatre, to combat the arguments of his opposers, or make the reparation they required. Mr. KEMBLE, though deliberate, was determined, and faced them without fear of their threats, or alarm at their num-

bers. It was agreed, after much altercation, that the matter should be promptly explained, for which purpose Mr. KEMBLE returned to his place behind the curtain, and the officers to their seats before it.

During this interval the audience appeared to have felt that Mr. KEMBLE's fair opponent was a common disturber, and accordingly, upon re-appearing, he was greeted, from the pit and galleries at least, with many tokens of applause. A loud shout was set up of "No apology!" but the boxes insisted on his being heard, which was ultimately agreed to, and Mr. KEMBLE, with great elegance and propriety, expatiated upon the impulse under which he had acted. He then proceeded to a temperate but honourable defence of the stage, in which he was interrupted by a coarse and illiberal adversary, who called upon him to relinquish his remarks, and solicit forgiveness. "*Never!*" "exclaimed Mr. KEMBLE, with a burst of uncontrollable disdain, as he indignantly quitted the stage, amidst the cheers of all who could resent his injuries, or value his spirit. The *lady*, who had exultingly returned to receive his submission, was planet-struck at this disappointment, and left the Theatre in inexpressible confusion, while her "wretched, rash, intruding" partizans, unable to accomplish their schemes, were compelled to adopt her example.

TO BE CONTINUED.

COVENT-GARDEN ORATORIO.

FRIDAY, *February* 18, 1820.—The Oratorios have commenced at this house, for the season, under the auspices of Mr. BISHOP, a circumstance which prepared us at once with a promise of their splendour, and must ensure a certainty of their success.

An "Epicedium," in memory of the late mournful events, was selected for the opening performance, and among a variety of interesting features presented us with KENT's anthem of "Hear my prayer," by Masters MARSHALL and GEAR, *the young gentlemen who performed it in Windsor, at his Majesty's funeral.* This excellent composition was executed with all that plaintive delicacy of which the subject is susceptible, and fully intitled its two juvenile singers to the very flattering approbation by which their efforts were attended. The second part comprised many favorite pieces from

HANDEL'S "Messiah," and the entertainment concluded with a light, copious, and tasteful miscellany of sacred and other music.

Mr. BRAHAM, whose fire, force, and fluency have long left him without a competitor in the highest regions of vocal excellence, has again lent his powerful aid to this orchestra, and upon the present occasion enriched it with some of those unparalleled beauties it is peculiarly his lot to supply. The pathetic air of "Total Eclipse" could not possibly be given with a truer feeling of its import, or a finer evidence of its power; "Comfort ye, my people," and the subsequent melody, were perfect specimens of art in a collateral department; and the cantata of "Alexis" evinced to what a pitch of even meaning volubility, the evolutions of science can be carried.

In Mr. BARTLEMAN, whose fame has long been ratified by the concurrent testimony of all who were qualified to approve, the public are presented with a performer of uncommon endowments. There is perhaps more music in the mind of Mr. BARTLEMAN, than belongs to the rest of our contemporary singers; he dives into the deep recesses of an author's meaning, and extricates his energy from the blandishments that surround it, with exclusive felicity. His performance of PERGOLESI'S "O Lord, have mercy," will attest the truth of this position, for which, however, if the sceptical want minuter testimony, let them read the air as it stands in original dulness, and then contrast it with the animating vigour of Mr. BARTLEMAN'S delivery.

Mr. BISHOP'S "Echo Song," and HANDEL'S "Let the bright Seraphim," were delightfully sung by Miss STEPHENS, who also joined Miss TREE in MARCELLO'S "*Qual Anelante*," with the happiest effect. The latter lady sang with her accustomed sweetness, and has merit enough to bear with a little expostulation. We did not like her execution of "Holy, holy, lord;" though marked by chastity of style, it wanted strength of expression, and was hardly atoned for by even the playful ease of ROSSINI'S "*Di piacere balza il mio cor.*"

Mr. KALKBRENNER, in the course of the evening, displayed his brilliant powers on the piano-forte, and Mr. LINDLEY performed a concerto on the violincello, with that unabated excellence which no emulation has ever equalled, and no ardour can record. The entertainments terminated with a new "Grand Battle Sinfonia," composed by WINTER, to commemorate the victory at Waterloo.

As a musical exposé of many martial manœuvres not easily detailed in the plainest language, it is a work that manifests uncommon ingenuity, and merits peculiar encouragement. We were glad to see it received with congenial fervour, and have no doubt that it will become an object of permanent attraction.

We repeat our belief that the measures of Mr. Bishop will render these oratorios a source of great public enjoyment, and again conduct the votaries of Fashion to a more intellectual altar than that deity is accustomed to prepare for their devotion. In popular arrangement the taste of Mr. Bishop has already developed its pre-eminence, and the sanction accorded by an overflowing audience, affords ample testimony that his great exertions will be duly rewarded. Z.

MR. MATHEWS.

MONDAY, *February* 28.—This distinguished performer, whose brilliant facility in "holding the mirror up to nature," has been vainly attempted by a herd of servile imitators, resumed his annual entertainment with a lecture upon local peculiarities, which is calculated at once to extend his reputation and enhance his success.

Under the title of "Something New," and by medium of his *Country Cousins*, who accompany him to the "Sights of London," Mr. Mathews introduces a variety of characters in the course of these visits, and by adopting the tone, thought, manner, habit, and peculiarity by which these personages are respectively distinguished, presents us with a fund of amusement which repetition itself will be unable to exhaust. The songs, which are numerous and appropriate, surpass even those of former seasons, replete as they were properly deemed with the truest points of satirical and humourous description. Two parts of the whole entertainment are occupied by this subject, which reflects the highest honour upon Mr. James Smith, by whose distinguished pen, we understand, it has been exclusively contributed.

The last part forms an exhibition of the most whimsical, yet anomalous, nature, it has ever been our duty to witness or record. Mr. Mathews, by animating *four* separate figures, *seen at once* by the spectator, effects an approximation to reality which no detail can enable our readers to appreciate or conceive. The plot and invention of this remarkable piece are attributed to Mr. R. B. Peake, the author of "Amateurs and Actors," &c. &c., and have con-

ferred that credit upon his ingenuity, which we take the testimony of unanimous applause, with heartfelt pleasure, as our sanction for ascribing.

Mr. MATHEWS, though decidedly an imitator, is segregated from the *servum pecus* by a rare and unrivalled faculty of turning the very perversities of human nature to its amusement and advantage. By him, the *lisping* or the *crippled* are viewed with indulgence, and exempt from exposure; he turns to a fairer field, and at the foibles of habit, or the errors of affectation,

> ——————— his taxing, like a wild goose, flies
> Unclaim'd of any man.

It is this principle which overflowing audiences have hitherto assembled to attest, and the same allurement appears to be followed again by a similar result.

Dramatic Obituary.

DIED.—On Friday, the 28th of January at her lodgings in the Upper Bristol road, Bath, aged 73, Mrs. BALL, formerly the celebrated Miss MANSELL, of the London and Bath Theatres, at which she sustained a wide range of arduous characters, with a power of expression, in the display of pathos or vehemence, that has seldom been excelled. She had long retired from the dramatic world, and, assailed by age and affliction, derived her chief support from an annuity of £25, granted by the National Benevolent Institution, and the usual assistance of a few charitable friends by whom her former excellence was properly remembered.

On Friday, February 4, at his seat in Shropshire, THOMAS KNIGHT, Esq. chief proprietor of the Theatre Royal, Liverpool, and formerly a favourite comedian at Covent-garden. His death was awfully sudden, and there are many philanthropic circumstances in his life, which render it a subject of particular lamentation.

On Tuesday, Feb. 15, at his house in Dublin, aged 68, LEONARD M'NALLY, Esq. of the Irish Bar, author of "Robin Hood," and other dramatic pieces.

THEATRICAL AND LITERARY CHIT-CHAT.

A TRAGEDY on the subject of the "Cid," by Mr. LEIGH HUNT, has been accepted at Drury-lane Theatre, after positive rejection by the rival manager. Some persons are weak enough to couple Mr. HUNT'S recent praise of Mr. KEAN for his failure in *Coriolanus*, with this circumstance, as indicating a kind of selfish patronage, which the Drury-lane advertisements now displayed in the "Examiner," are certainly not adapted to disprove.

Antient Drama.

No. V.

THE AVENUE to scenic regularity having been opened by the interludes of HEYWOOD, an author celebrated for "mirth and quickness of conceit," it was speedily pursued by a writer of congenial qualities, who has furnished us with our earliest specimen of English comedy, in which the action is unbroken, and the unities are preserved. This curious effort, though not published till the year 1575, was evidently written at a much higher period, is printed in black letter, and bears the following title:

A RYGHT PYTHY, PLEASANT, AND MERIE COMEDIE INTYTULED GAMMER GURTON'S NEEDLE; PLAYED ON THE STAGE NOT LONGE AGO IN CHRISTES COLLEDGE IN CAMBRIDGE: MADE BY MR. S. MASTER OF ARTS; IMPRYNTED AT LONDON IN FLEETE STREATE BENETH THE CONDUITE AT THE SIGN OF ST. JOHN EVANGELIST, BY THOMAS COLWELL.

This piece is opened by a very compendious prologue, which, in lieu of enhancing the labour of the poet, or propitiating the kindness of his audience, details the precise incident, characters, conversation, and catastrophe of which his fable is compounded. Such an address, by obviating the curiosity of its hearers, is a singular instance of that uniform simplicity with which the dawnings of dramatic genius were attended:

As Gammer Gurton, with many a wide stiche,
Sat pesing and patching of Hodge her man's briche;
By chance or misfortune, as she her gear tost,
In Hodge lether briches her nedle she lost.
When Diccon the bedlam had hard by report,
That good Gammer Gurton was rob'd in this sort,
He quietlie perswaded with her in that stound,
Dame Chat her dear gossip this nedle had found.
Yet knew she no more of this matter (alas)
Then knoweth Tom our clarke what the priest saith at masse:
Hereof their ensued so fearful a fray,
Mas Doctor was sent for these gossips to stay;
Because he was curate and esteemed full wise,
Who found that he sought not, by Diccon's device.
When all things were tombled and clean out of fassion,
Whether it were by fortune, or some other constellation,
Sodenlie the nedle Hodge found by the pricking,
And drew out of his buttocke where he found it sticking.

Their hearts then at rest with perfect security,
With a pot of good nale they stroak up their plaudity.

The piece is then opened with the entrance of *Diccon*, the Bedlam,* who after adverting to the good cheer he had variously encountered in the course of his peregrinations, details the dismal "plight" in which he has just found *Gammer Gurton* and her family:

There is a howling and scowling, all cast in a dumpe,
With whewling and pewling, as though they had loste a trump.

Having refused to satisfy his interrogatories, when bent upon ascertaining the cause of their disaster, he slipped "out at doors" with a piece of bacon, and is on his way to the ale-house, where, unless his expectations proves fallacious, it shall serve "for a shoing horn," to draw on two pots of the liquor in which he delights to indulge.

The "second sceane" commences with the arrival of *Hodge*, a labourer employed by *Gammer Gurton*, who laments, in a strong provincial dialect, that the occupation of ditching, with which he is invested, independent of covering him with dirt, had torn "a gashe, a shameful hole indead," in the aukwardest part of his nether garment. In reply to *Diccon*, who suggests the remedy of patching, he asserts that two days were hardly elapsed, since these breeches had been thoroughly mended. But, says he,

Cham made such a drudge, to trudge at every need,
Chwold rend it, though it were stitched with sturdy packthreed.

Relinquishing this subject, honest *Diccon* endeavours to learn

What devil aileth gammer Gurton, and Tib her maid to frown.

Hodge imputes this sullenness to their "daily looke," but such a conclusion being strongly disputed, he reverts, with true clownish superstition, to an unheeded, though irrefragable omen of the "prancome" that had given rise to *Diccon's* unwelcome information:

Hodge.

Nay, but ich saw such a wounder, as ich saw not this seven year.
Tome Tankard's cow, be gog's bones, she set me up her sail,
And flinging about his halfe-aker, fisking with her tail,
As though there had been in her———a swarm of bees,
An chad not cryed "Iprowh, hoor!" she'ad lept out of his lees.

Diccon.

Why, Hodge, lies the conning in Tom Tankard's cowes tail?

* Bedlamite.

Hodge.

Well, ich chave hard some say such tokens do not fail.

At the termination of this instructive dialogue, *Diccon* departs for good-wife Chat's "to feel how the ale doth tast," while *Hodge* enters his mistress's cottage to gather tidings of her heavy misfortune. Here, having evinced some rustic apprehension that the house may be haunted by a "fellon spirit," he learns from *Tib*, that their Gammer is so "out of course, and franticke all at once," that many legible marks of her displeasure had been stamped on the bones of her astonished houshold. After several vain guesses at the origin of this disquietude, he ultimately conjectures its immediate cause,—the loss of her "neele," the circumstances of which are thus detailed by poor *Tib*, with very ludicrous fidelity:

My gammer sat her down on the pes; and bad me reach thy breches.
And by and by, a vengeance on it, or she had took two stitches
To clout upon thine——, by chaunce aside she leare,
And Gib our cat, in the milk-pan she spied over head and eare.
"A, hoor, out, theefe!" she cried aloud, and swapt the breeches down,
Up went her staffe, and out lept Gib at doors into the town:
And since that time was never wight could set their eies upon it.
God's malison chave Cocke and I bid twentie times light on it.

Gammer Gurton comes forward at this juncture, lamenting the loss of her "neele," which *Tib* is immediately dispatched to look for in a "heap of dust," that she had recently carried to the end of the town. In the meantime, *Hodge*, who is filled with grief and shame at the fractured condition of his breeches, reproaches *Gammer Gurton*, with great asperity, for the carelessness of her conduct, and asks for a candle to assist in retrieving the precious object of their general search. *Tib* returns, unsuccessfully, from her errand, having winnowed the heap of dust through and through with her fingers, "as men wold winow grain." *Hodge* is, *ad interim*, pursuing his search, the scene, progress, and result of which are thus humourously described:

Cocke.

Gog's crosse, gammer, if ye will laugh, look in but at the doore,
And see how Hodge lieth tombling and tossing amids the floure,
Raking there, some fyre to find among the ashes dead,
Where there is not one sparke so big as a pin's head:
At last, in a dark corner, two sparkes he thought he sees,
Which were, indeed, nought else but Gib our cat's two eyes;
"Puff," quod Hodge, thinking thereby to have fyre without doubt:
With that Gib shut her two eyes, and so the fyre was out,

And by and by, them opened even as they were before;
With that the sparkes appeared even as they had done of yore,
And even as Hodge blew the fire, as he did thinck,
Gib, as she felt the blast, straight way began to wincke,
Till Hodge fell of swering, as came best to his turn,
The fier was sure bewitcht and therefore would not burn:
At last, Gib up the stayers among the old postes and pins,
And Hodge he hied him after, til broke were both his shins;
Cursing and swearing oths, were never of his making,
That Gib would fire the house, if that she were not taken.

Hodge descends at the importunate solicitation of his mistress, who explains the error by which he is misled, and joins the searchers below, till their candle is expended, and they retire with a promise of returning, when a fresh supply of light will allow them to resume their employment.

TO BE CONTINUED.

DIALOGUE ON THE DRAMA.

"I SUPPOSE, sir," said Mr. VINCENT, with a sneer, "that as your toleration is so extensive, it comprehends THEATRICAL ENTERTAINMENTS, and all their abominable et-ceteras."

Not "*their abominable et-ceteras*," replied Mr. MAITLAND; "but if our Theatres were better regulated, I think the stage might be extremely useful."

"It will never be any thing," exclaimed Mr. VINCENT, "but a hot-bed for vice and voluptuousness."

At this moment, the quadrille finished, and the party assembled round the disputants.*

* VINCENT, it should be observed, is a divine of rigid principles, and MAITLAND a clerical character as sincerely pious, though less oppressively austere. MONTAGUE MOWBRAY and Mr. SPENSER are youths "of imagination all compact," and this introduction to their respective peculiarities will probably assist the sentiments they individually deliver.

We embrace the present opportunity, with unaffected pleasure, to lay before the author of "Geraldine,—" a novel just published,—our warmest acknowledgments for the extracts we have taken from its pages. Though we cannot review this didactic work, it is our duty to recommend it; the great moral end it has been written to achieve, is powerfully enforced by interesting narrative, well-drawn character, and animated diction; the purposes of RELIGION, so sacred in themselves, are here enveloped with a mantle of peculiar allurement, and these volumes will at once be found to enlighten the understanding, and amuse the fancy—EDITOR.

"The very atmosphere is contagious," continued Mr. VINCENT: "a young man may as well trust himself in a den of lions, as within the walls of a Theatre."

"And yet," observed MONTAGUE, "men of high morality, and whose high religious principles it would be somewhat rash to question, have honoured the drama, not only with their sanction, but with their assistance. Can any one doubt the piety of MILTON? And yet he has left us his delicious "Comus." May we not still learn of JOHNSON, how to live, and of ADDISON, how to die, though they both wrote for the stage?"

"To these great names," observed Mr. MAITLAND, "I may add that of a lady, whose pure and enlightened piety you cannot but appreciate; whose talents are acknowledged by all parties; whose soundness of judgment none can deny. We are indebted, to Mrs. MORE, for the chaste and affecting tragedy of "Percy."

"The authors you have enumerated, sir," said Mr. VINCENT, "were human, and consequently liable to errors of judgment."

"And you, sir, are *also human*," said HENRY WENTWORTH, bowing to him with affected gravity, "and *consequently liable to errors of judgment*."

Mr. VINCENT frowned, and the rest of the party, with the exception of Mr. MAITLAND, smiled.

"Do you imagine, sir," said Mr. SPENSER, "that the world would have been wiser or better, if SHAKSPEARE had never existed? Was not his towering and matchless genius the gift of heaven itself? Would he have done well to bury this precious and peculiar talent in the earth?*

"Genius, sir," replied Mr. VINCENT, "may dazzle us with its splendour, but cannot alter facts. I believe I am not singular in considering THEATRICAL ESTABLISHMENTS to be engines of devilish power, producing the most fatal and pernicious effects. Whoever, therefore, contributes to increase their fascinations, had better, in my opinion, never have existed."

"I consider that to be a point which it does not become us to decide," said Mr. MAITLAND. "Let us leave the use and abuse of talents to be *judged* by him who gave them."

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* The bard himself has observed, that

——————spirits are not finely touch'd,
But to fine issues.

"Are you intimately acquainted with the authors you so uncharitably condemn?" inquired MONTAGUE. "Have you balanced their merits and defects with a very nice hand?"

Mr. VINCENT hoped that he had something of more importance to attend to, than such idle nonsense.

"Then we will not hail you as a wise young judge—a second Daniel. A man born blind might as well attempt to talk of the radiant colours of the sky; or one born deaf, to decide upon the effects of harmony."

"We, who know what it is to have all the generous sympathies of our nature awakened by theatrical exhibitions; who have felt our admiration of all that is sublime in mind or touching in morality, quickened by the combined genius of a great poet and a great actor, are not likely to be much impressed by the anathemas of mere prejudice."*

"Sir," said Mr. VINCENT, rallying sturdily against his host of opponents, "the slight momentary impulses of which you speak, scarcely affect the question at all; they may be bad as well as good. The sympathy excited by the tragedy of the "Robbers," which induced some young men of rank to associate for the purpose of robbing in the forests of Bohemia, was not much to be prized."

"The absurdities of the German school are not the question now," returned Mr. SPENSER; "they could not be long tolerated in England. But do 'Macbeth,' and 'Othello,' teach no useful lessons? The finest sermons that ever were written have not pourtrayed the danger and guilt of ambition, with half the energy, the irresistible force with which SHAKSPEARE paints it: we learn to shudder at the first light thought of evil that passes like a shadow across the mind, and is gone; we see and feel its danger. And who that contemplates the pangs of *Othello*, and the exquisite, confiding tenderness of *Desdemona*, does not learn to dread the 'green-eyed monster jealousy?'"

"If lessons thus forcible and impressive were always taught upon the stage," said Mr. MAITLAND, "who would deny its utility?"

* This and the foregoing paragraphs are not appropriated to their specific speaker, but appear to be emanations from the genius of Mr. SPENSER.—EDITOR.

THOUGHTS ON THE CEREMONIAL

OF

AN ENGLISH CORONATION.

BY DR. JOHNSON.

ALL pomp is instituted for the sake of the public. A show without spectators can no longer be a show. Magnificence in obscurity is equally vain with *a sun-dial in the grave.*

As the wisdom of our ancestors has appointed a very splendid and ceremonious inauguration of our kings, their intention was that they should receive their crown with such awful rites, as might for ever impress upon them a due sense of the duties which they were to take, when the happiness of nations is put into their hands; and that the people, as many as can possibly be witnesses to any single act, should openly acknowledge their sovereign by universal homage.

By the last method of conducting the coronation, all these purposes were defeated. Our kings, with their train, have crept to the temple through obscure passages; and the crown has been worn out of sight of the people. Of the multitudes, whom loyalty, or curiosity brought together, the greater part has returned without a single glimpse of their prince's grandeur, and the day that opened with festivity ended with discontent.

This evil has proceeded from the narrowness and shortness of the way through which the procession has usually passed. As it is narrow, it admits of very few spectators; as it is short, it is soon passed. The first part of the train reaches the abbey before the whole has left the palace; and the nobility of England, in their robes of state, display their riches only to themselves.

All this inconvenience may be easily avoided by chusing a wider and longer course, which may be again enlarged and varied by going one way and returning another. This is not without a precedent; for, not to enquire into the practice of remoter princes, the procession of CHARLES the Second's coronation issued from the *Tower,* and passed through the whole length of the city to *Whitehall.**

* The king went early in the morning to the Tower of London in his coach, most of the lords being there before. And about ten of the clock, they set forward towards Whitehall, ranged in that order as the heralds had appointed;

The path in the late coronations has been only from Westminster-hall, along New Palace-yard, into Union-street, through the extreme end of King-street, and to the Abbey-door, by the way of St. Margaret's church-yard.

The paths which I propose the procession to pass through, are,

I. From St. James's palace, along Pall-Mall and Charing-cross, by Whitehall, through Parliament-street, down Bridge-street, into King-street, round St. Margaret's church-yard, and from thence into the Abbey.

II. From St. James's palace, across the canal, into the Bird-cage walk, from thence into Great George-street, then turning down Long-ditch, proceed to the Abbey. Or,

III. Continuing the course along George-street, into King-street, and by the way of St. Margaret's church-yard, to pass into the west door of the Abbey.

IV. From St. James's palace, the usual way his Majesty passes to the House of Lords, as far as to the parade, when, leaving the horse-guards on the left, proceed along the park, up to Great George-street, and pass to the Abbey in either of the tracks last mentioned.

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those of the long robe, the king's council at law, the masters of the chancery, and judges, going first, and so the lords in their order, very splendidly habited, on rich footcloths; the number of their footmen being limited, to the dukes ten, to the lords eight, and to the viscounts six, and the barons four, all richly clad, as their other servants were. The whole show was the most glorious in the order and expense, that had been ever seen in England; they who rode first being in Fleet-street when the king issued out of the Tower, as was known by the discharge of the ordnance: and it was near three of the clock in the afternoon, when the king alighted at Whitehall. The next morning the king rode in the same state in his robes, and with his crown on his head, and all the lords in their robes, to Westminster-hall; where all the ensigns for the coronation were delivered to those who were appointed to carry them, the earl of NORTHUMBERLAND being made high-constable, and the earl of SUFFOLK earl-marshal, for the day. And then all the lords in their order, and the king himself, walked on foot, upon blue cloth, from Westminster-Hall to the Abbey Church, where, after a sermon preached by Dr. MORLEY, (then bishop of WORCESTER) in HENRY the Seventh's chapel, the king was sworn, crowned, and anointed, by Dr. JUXON, archbishop of CANTERBURY, with all the solemnity that in those cases had been used. All which being done, the king returned in the same manner on foot to Westminster-hall, which was adorned with rich hangings and statues; and there the king dined, and the lords on either side at tables provided for them: and all other ceremonies were performed with great order and magnificence.—

"*Life of Lord Clarendon;*" p. 187.

V. From Westminster-hall into Parliament-street, down Bridge-street, along Great George-street, through Long-ditch, and soon to the west door of the Abbey.

VI. From Whitehall up Parliament-street, down Bridge-street, into King-street, round St. Margaret's church-yard, proceed into the Abbey.

VII. From the House of Lords along St. Margaret's-street, across New Palace-yard, into Parliament-street, and from thence to the Abbey by the way last mentioned.

But if, on no account, the path must be extended to any of the lengths here recommended, I could wish, rather than see the procession confined to the old way, that it should pass,

VIII. From Westminster-hall along Palace-yard, into Parliament-street, and continued in the last mentioned path, *viz.* through Bridge-street, King-street, and round the church-yard to the west door of the cathedral.

IX. The return from the Abbey, in either case, to be as usual, *viz.* round St. Margaret's church-yard, into King-street, through Union-streeet, along New Palace-yard, and so into Westminster-hall.

It is almost indifferent which of the six first ways now proposed be taken; but there is a stronger reason than mere convenience for changing the common course. Some of the streets in the old track are so ruinous, that there is danger lest the houses, loaded as they will be with people, all pressing forward in the same direction, should fall down upon the procession. The least evil that can be expected is, that in so close a crowd, some will be trampled upon and others smothered; and surely a pomp that costs a single life is too dearly bought. The new streets, as they are more extensive, will afford place to greater numbers, with less danger.

In this proposal I do not foresee any objection that can reasonably be made. That a longer march will require more time, is not to be mentioned as implying any defect in a scheme of which the whole purpose is to lengthen the march and protract the time. The longest course which I have proposed is not equal to an hour's walk in the Park. The labour is not such as that the king should refuse it to his people, or the nobility grudge it to the king. Queen Anne went from the palace through the park to the hall, on the day of her coronation; and when old and infirm, used to pass on solemn thanksgivings from the palace to St. Paul's church.*

* In order to convey to the reader some idea how highly parade and magnifi-

A longer course of scaffolding is doubtless more expensive than a shorter; but it is hoped that the time is now past, when any design was received or rejected according to the money that it would

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cence were estimated by our ancestors, on these solemn occasions, I shall take notice of the manner of conducting Lady ANNE BOLEYN from Greenwich, previous to her coronation, as it is recited by STOW.

King HENRY VIII. (says that historian) having divorced Queen CATHERINE, and married ANN BOLEYN, or BOLOINE, who was descended from GODFREY BOLOINE, mayor of the city of London, and intending her coronation, sent to order the lord mayor, not only to make all the preparations necessary for conducting his royal consort from Greenwich, by water, to the Tower of London, but to adorn the city after the most magnificent manner, for her passage through it to Westminster.

In obedience to the royal precept, the mayor and common council not only ordered the company of haberdashers, of which the lord mayor was a member, to prepare a magnificent state barge; but enjoined all the city corporations to provide themselves with barges, and to adorn them in the most superb manner, and especially to have them supplied with good bands of music.

On the 29th of May, the time prefixed for this pompous procession by water, the mayor, aldermen, and commons, assembled at St. Mary-hill; the mayor and aldermen in scarlet, with gold chains, and those who were knights, with the collars of S. S. At one they went on board the city barge at Billingsgate, which was most magnificently decorated, and attended by fifty noble barges, belonging to the several companies of the city, with each its own corporation on board; and, for the better regulation of this procession, it was ordered that each barge should keep twice their lengths asunder.

Thus regulated, the city barge was preceded by another mounted with ordnance, and the figures of dragons, and other monsters, incessantly emitting fire and smoke, with much noise. Then the city barge, attended on the right by the haberdashers' state barge, called the Bachelors', which was covered with gold brocade, and adorned with sails of silk, with two rich standards of the king's and queen's arms at her head and stern, besides a variety of flags and streamers, containing the arms of that company, and those of the merchant adventurers; besides which, the shrouds and ratlines were hung with a number of small bells: on the left was a barge that contained a very beautiful mount, on which stood a white falcon crowned, perched upon a golden stump enriched with roses, being the queen's emblem; and round the mount sat several beautiful virgins, singing, and playing upon instruments. The other barges followed in regular order, till they came below Greenwich. On their return the procession began with that barge which was before the last, in which were mayor's and sheriff's officers, and this was followed by those of the inferior companies, ascending to the lord mayor's, which immediately preceded that of the queen, who was attended by the Bachelors' or state barge, with the magnificence of which her majesty was much delighted; and being arrived at the Tower, she returned the lord mayor and aldermen thanks for the pomp with which she had been conducted thither.

cost. Magnificence cannot be cheap, for what is cheap cannot be magnificent. The money that is so spent, is spent at home, and the king will receive again what he lays out on the pleasure of his

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Two days after, the lord mayor, in a gown of crimson velvet, and a rich collar of S. S. attended by the sheriffs and two domestics in red and white damask, went to receive the queen at the Tower of London, whence the sheriffs returned to see that every thing was in order. The streets were just before new gravelled from the Tower to Temple-bar, and railed in on each side, to the intent that the horses should not slide on the pavement, nor the people be hurt by the horses; within the rails near Grace-church, stood a body of Hanseatic merchants, and next to them the several corporations of the city, in their formalities, reaching to the aldermen's station at the upper end of Cheapside. On the opposite side were placed the city constables dressed in silk and velvet, with staffs in their hands, to prevent the breaking in of the mob, or any other disturbance. On this occasion, Gracechurch-street and Cornhill were hung with crimson and scarlet cloth, and the sides of the houses of a place then called Goldsmiths'-row, in Cheapside, were adorned with gold brocades, velvet, and rich tapestry.

The procession began from the Tower with twelve of the French ambassador's domestics in blue velvet, the trappings of their horses being blue sarsnet, interspersed with white crosses; after whom marched those of the equestrian order, two and two, followed by judges in their robes two and two, then came the knights of the Bath in violet gowns, purfled with miniver. Next came the abbots, barons, bishops, earls, and marquesses, in their robes, two and two. Then the lord chancellor, followed by the Venetian ambassador and the arcbishop of YORK: next the French ambassador and the archbishop of CANTERBURY, followed by two gentlemen representing the dukes of NORMANDY and AQUITAIN; after whom rode the lord mayor of LONDON, with his mace, and Garter, in his coat of arms; then the duke of SUFFOLK, lord-high steward, followed by the deputy marshal of ENGLAND, and all the other officers of state in their robes, carrying the symbols of their several offices: then others of the uobility in crimson velvet, and all the queen's officers in scarlet, followed by her chancellor uncovered, who immediately preceded his mistress.

The queen was dressed in silver brocade, with a mantle of the same furred with ermine; her hair was dishevelled, and she wore a chaplet upon her head set with jewels of inestimable value. She sat in a litter covered with silver tissue, and carried by two beautiful pads cloathed in white damask, and led by her footmen. Over the litter was carried a canopy of cloth of gold, with a silver bell at each corner, supported by sixteen knights alternately, by four at a time.

After her majesty, came her chamberlain, followed by her master of horse, leading a beautiful pad, with a side-saddle and trappings of silver tissue. Next came seven ladies in crimson velvet, faced with gold brocade, mounted on beautiful horses with gold trappings. Then followed two chariots covered with cloth of gold, in the first of which were the duchess of NORFOLK and the marchioness of DORSET, and in the second four ladies in crimson velvet; then followed seven ladies dressed in the same manner, on horseback, with magnificent trappings, fol-

people. Nor is it to be omitted, that if the cost be considered as expended by the public, much more will be saved than lost; for the excessive prices at which windows and tops of houses are now let, will be abated, not only greater numbers will be admitted to the show, but each will come at a cheaper rate.

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lowed by another chariot all in white, with six ladies in crimson velvet; this was followed by another all in red, with eight ladies in the same dress with the former: next came thirty gentlewomen, attendants to the ladies of honour; they were on horseback, dressed in silks and velvet; and the cavalcade was closed by the horse-guards.

This pompous procession being arrived in Fenchurch-street, the queen stopped at a beautiful pageant, crowded with children in mercantile habits; who congratulated her majesty upon the joyful occasion of her happy arrival in the city.

Thence she proceeded to Gracechurch-corner, where was erected a very magnificent pageant, at the expense of the company of Hanseatic merchants, in which was represented mount Parnassus, with the fountain of Helicon, of white marble, out of which arose four springs about four feet high, centering at the top in a small globe, from whence issued plenty of Rhenish wine till night. On the mount sat *Apollo*, at his feet was *Calliope*, and beneath were the rest of the Muses, surrounding the mount and playing upon a variety of musical instruments, at whose feet were inscribed several epigrams suited to the occasion, in letters of gold.

Her majesty then proceeded to Leadenhall, where stood a pageant, representing a hill encompassed with red and white roses; and above it was a golden stump, upon which a white falcon, descending from above, perched, and was quickly followed by an angel, who put a crown of gold upon his head. A little lower on the hillock sat *St. Anne*, surrounded by her progeny, one of whom made an oration, in which was a wish that her majesty might prove extremely prolific.

The procession then advanced to the conduit in Cornhill; where the graces sat enthroned, with a fountain before them, incessantly discharging wine; and underneath, a poet, who described the qualities peculiar to each of these amiable deities, and presented the queen with their several gifts.

The cavalcade thence proceeded to a great conduit that stood opposite to Mercer's-hall in Cheapside, and, upon that occasion, was painted with a variety of emblems, and during the solemnity and remaining part of the day, ran with different sorts of wine, for the entertainment of the populace.

At the end of Wood-street, the standard there was finely embellished with royal portraitures and a number of flags, on which were painted coats of arms and trophies, and above was a concert of vocal and instrumental music.

At the upper end of Cheapside was the aldermen's station, where the recorder addressed the queen in a very elegant oration, and, in the name of the citizens, presented her with a thousand marks in a purse of gold tissue, which her majesty very graciously received.

At a small distance, by Cheapside-conduit, was a pageant, in which were *Minerva*, *Juno*, and *Venus*; before whom stood the god *Mercury*; who, in their names, presented the queen a golden apple.

Some other regulations are necessary, whatever track be chosen. The scaffold ought to be raised at least four feet, with rails high enough to support the standers, and yet so low as not to hinder the view.

It would add much to the gratification of the people, if the horse-guards, by which all our processions have been of late encumbered, and rendered dangerous to the multitude, were to be left behind at the coronation; and if, contrary to the desires of the people, the procession must pass in the old track, that the number of foot-soldiers be diminished; since it cannot but offend every Englishman to see troops of soldiers placed between him and his sovereign, as if they were the most honourable of the people, or the king required guards to secure his person from his subjects. As their station makes them think themselves important, their insolence is always such as may be expected from servile authority; and the impatience of the people, under such immediate oppression, always produces quarrels, tumults, and mischief.

At St. Paul's gate was a fine pageant, in which sat three ladies richly dressed, with each a chaplet on her head, and a tablet in her hand, containing Latin inscriptions.

At the east end of St. Paul's cathedral, the queen was entertained by some of the scholars belonging to St, Paul's school, with verses in praise of the king and her majesty, with which she seemed highly delighted.

Thence proceeding to Ludgate, which was finely decorated, her majesty was entertained with festival songs adapted to the occasion, sung in concert by men and boys upon the leads over the gate.

At the end of Shoe-lane, in Fleet-street, a handsome tower with four turrets was erected upon the conduit, in each of which stood one of the cardinal virtues, with their several symbols; who, addressing themselves to the queen, promised they would never leave her, but be always her constant attendants. Within the tower was an excellent concert of music, and the conduit all the while ran with various sorts of wine.

At Temple-bar she was again entertained with songs, sung in concert by a choir of men and boys; and having from thence proceeded to Wesminster, she returned the lord mayor thanks for his good offices, and those of the citizens, that day. The day after, the lord mayor, aldermen, and sheriffs, assisted at the coronation, which was performed with great splendor.—"*Stow's Annals.*"

The same historian informs us, that Queen ELIZABETH passed in the like manner, through the city, to her coronation.

ILLEGALITY OF THE MINOR THEATRES.

WARD q. t. *versus* GLOSSOP.

THE rumoured opposition of the Patent Theatres against the lesser houses of dramatic amusement, has at length been reduced to a legal shape, in pursuance of which the Magistrates at Union-hall named Wednesday, January 19, for the arguing of a regular information.

Accordingly, at the time appointed, Mr. CHAMBERS and Sir JOHN PINHORN, who expected the information to be brought on at one o'clock, were in readiness to take cognizance of the customary proceeding. The office was thronged with theatrical persons, among whom we noticed the defendant, Mr. GLOSSOP, Mr. ASTLEY of the Royal Amphitheatre, and many other individuals, connected either by interest or feeling, with the measure about to be discussed.

Soon after one, Mr. BURGESS, solicitor to Drury-lane Theatre, addressed Mr. CHAMBERS, expressing a wish to know whether the magistrates would hear counsel after three o'clock, as Messrs. ADOLPHUS and POLLOCK, who had been retained for the respective parties, were not able to attend before that hour.

Mr. CHAMBERS observed, that though he had been waiting with his brother magistrate for an hour and a half, to dispose of the information, still they were willing to sit all day, if any chance could be afforded of getting through the business by a reasonable time. Additional delay, however, would annihilate that prospect, and he therefore recommended an adjournment, as it was uncertain at what period the absent parties would arrive to prosecute the cause.

Mr. ROGERS, sen. the defendant's solicitor, who then entered the office, expressed his willingness to postpone the hearing. It was therefore deferred, after a short conversation, to that day se'nnight, when the persons already summoned were again directed to attend.

Accordingly, on the day appointed by adjournment to hear the information, at the instance of the Secretary of the Drury-lane Theatre Committee, for penalties against Mr. GLOSSOP, the Proprietor of the Royal Coburg Theatre, for infringing his License, by enacting at that Theatre a modified performance of the tragedy of "Richard III." the defendant, attended by his counsel, Mr. ADOLPHUS and Mr. DOWLING, appeared before the sitting magistrates for the purpose of meeting the charge, when it was discovered that the information had been withdrawn without any reason assigned.

The informer's counsel, Messrs. F. Pollock and Mr. Turton, were not in attendance, but his solicitor, Mr. Burgess, appeared, and stated his regret that the learned counsel on the other side should have had the trouble of attending, as notice had been sent to Messrs. Rogers and Son, the solicitors for Mr. Glossop, that the information had been withdrawn, and that it would be unnecessary for them to appear pursuant to the adjournment.

Mr. Adolphus and Mr. Dowling urged, that the circumstance of such notice having been sent, was no reason why they should not appear pursuant to the adjournment, the object of which appearance was to meet the information if it could be sustained, and if not, to have a verdict of acquittal recorded. They complained in strong terms of the uncandid manner in which the information had been withdrawn during the interval of an adjournment,—the necessary inference from which was, that the parties at whose instance the information was lodged, were conscious of the injustice and unpopularity of the step they had taken, so prejudicial to the interests of Mr. Glossop. The defendant having appeared to the information, he was entitled to have an acquittal entered upon the record, and they now prayed that the information might be dismissed, as the prosecutor did not think proper to come forward.

The sitting magistrates said, they could have nothing to say to the business, inasmuch as the information had been wholly withdrawn on Tuesday, and as there was nothing upon which they could proceed, the presence of the learned counsel was quite unnecessary. It was the ordinary and every day's practice to lodge informations under penal statutes, and withdraw them at the will of the parties prosecuting. Such was the present instance, and there was no precedent which justified the defendant in having an acquittal recorded. In fact, there was no information now before the Court.

Mr. Adolphus and Mr. Dowling reprobated the practice alluded to, as highly injurious to the character of persons who might be subject to malicious and unfounded accusations. In the present instance, Mr. Glossop had been subjected to a charge highly injurious to his property,—he had appeared to the charge with a manful determination of meeting it, and after the expense, inconvenience, and trouble, to which he had been put, he had much reason to complain of the uncandid course which the business had taken.

The magistrates repeated what the practice of the office was, and that they had now no information before them on which they could act, one way or the other.

Mr. Burgess, the solicitor, then lodged another information of the like nature, but containing other allegations, when the counsel and parties retired, the cause being fixed for renewal on Wednesday, the 9th of February.

The office on this occasion was again crowded with theatrical characters, anxious to learn the result of a contest in which the prosperity, if not the existence of all the Minor Theatres in the metropolis, was concerned. The magistrates present were Messieurs Birnie, King, Jackson, Holmer, Davis, and Chambers; the two latter being the acting justices entrusted with the immediate decision of the affair.

Soon after twelve o'olock, Mr. Pollock and Mr. Turton appeared, the former as counsel for Covent-garden, and the latter for Drury-lane Theatre; Messieurs Adolphus and Dowling were retained for the defendant.

Before the clerk proceeded to read the information, Mr. Turton claimed the indulgence of the magistrates for a momentary remark. It had been rumoured, he said, that one of the prosecutors in this case was Mr. Elliston; but he begged leave to state, that he was not concerned in any way whatever, beyond the injury or advantage his interests might derive from the decision of that day. "I appear," said the learned counsel, "on behalf of the proprietors of Drury-lane Theatre, or rather on behalf of the committee by which that body is represented. They have been urged to this prosecution by a sense of the duty that is owing to those persons who have invested them with the protection of their property in the Theatre.

Mr. Chambers. This, I suppose, is the prologue?

Mr. Adolphus. Nay, sir, my learned friend means to act the whole drama by himself.

Mr. Birnie. I must say this savours a good deal of the *shop*.

Mr. Adolphus suggested to the magistrates the propriety of allowing to his client the expenses that were naturally incurred by his attendance at this office, thrice during the preceding month, when the information was deferred. Mr. Chambers did not think the defendant entitled to such a compensation; certainly, under the present circumstances, he knew not how an order could be made to that effect. Mr. Adolphus still thought it a hardship that his client should have been brought here, and put off from day to day upon the subject of this information. He should not, however, *press* for his expenses.

The information was then detailed. It set forth that the defendant, JOSEPH GLOSSOP, one of the proprietors of the Royal Coburg Theatre, caused to be acted at the said Theatre, on the 29th of December last, a certain tragedy entitled "Richard III.; or, the Battle of Bosworth Field," he having no authority, by virtue of letters patent from his Majesty, or of a license from the Lord Chamberlain, to cause tragedies, or any entertainments of the stage, to be acted at the said Theatre. The information contained various other counts, charging a repetition of the offence, and varying the title of the piece,—as a melo-drama, a play, an entertainment of the stage, &c. To this document the name of CHARLES WILLIAM WARD was subscribed as informer.

Mr. POLLOCK then stated, that he appeared on behalf of the proprietors of Covent-garden Theatre, to pray the magistrates for the conviction of JOSEPH GLOSSOP, upon one or more of the charges contained in the information. It was founded upon the 10th GEO. II. c. 28.; and the question now before the magistrate was, whether that statute had or had not been violated by the defendant. He was sorry that his learned friend should have taken so narrow a view of the question, as to suppose that it merely comprised the infliction of a £50 penalty. The real object, however, was specifically this,—to ascertain if the law was to be observed or set aside at pleasure; if the interests it had secured were to be sacrificed or protected. It presented a wide field of speculation, to consider how far it was necessary for legislative wisdom to interfere in the regulation of public entertainments. Into that field he did not propose to enter, farther than to express his opinion, that such entertainments formed one of the most important subjects to which it could be applied. Indeed it was not open to his learned friend to impugn the wisdom which had deemed those entertainments worthy of its peculiar care. The simple question for him to answer was this: "Is there such a law, and has it, or has it not, been violated?" The 10th GEO. II. c. 28. expressly enacted, that "every person who shall, for hire, gain, or reward, act, represent, or perform, or cause to be acted, represented, or performed, any interlude, tragedy, comedy, opera, play, farce, or other entertainment of the stage, or any part or parts therein, without authority, by virtue of letters patent from his Majesty, his heirs, successors, or predecessors, or without license from the Lord Chamberlain of his Majesty's household for the time being, shall, for every such offence, forfeit the sum of £50." The

statute went on to provide, that the penalty might be sued for by bill or plaint in his Majesty's Court of King's Bench, or by action at the Quarter Sessions, or by a summary proceeding before the magistrates of the district in which the offence should be committed; and enacted, that one moiety of the fine should be given to the informer, and the other to the poor of the parish. The information contained various counts, diversifying the title of the piece, for the purpose of leaving no doubt that it had been performed. There were other counts, which charged the performance of certain parts of the play in question, and particularly cited the well-known scene beginning with

> Now is the winter of our discontent
> Made glorious summer by this sun of York.

The facts upon which the information would be supported were these. The defendant, GLOSSOP, was proprietor of a house called the Royal Coburg Theatre, licensed, pursuant to the 25th GEO. II. c. 36. by the district justices, for entertainments of music and dancing,—an authority that did not, and could not, legalize entertainments of the stage. It was now for the magistrates to see whether the entertainments which, it would be proved in evidence, were exhibited at the Coburg Theatre, fell within the meaning of their license or not. Placards were affixed to the exterior of that building, from the mere perusal of which nobody could harbour any doubt that the entertainment they announced was in truth an "entertainment of the stage." The bills to which he alluded, announced the first appearance of Mr. BOOTH at that Theatre, and went on to say, that he would perform on a specified night in a melo-drama called "Richard the Third; or, the Battle of Bosworth-field." All the parts in that melo-drama were enumerated, and to each was assigned its respective performer. It would be shewn that the piece above mentioned was, in fact, afterwards performed, with few essential variations from the text adopted at Drury-lane and Covent-garden. There was, indeed, one slight circumstance of deviation from the practice of the Patent Theatres,—inasmuch as a musical instrument, not audible beyond the orchestra, was now and then slightly touched, apparently for the purpose of accompanying the play. But the license did not extend to the performance of any thing but music and dancing; it did not extend to the performance of a play, though connected with the one, and relieved by the other. He presumed it was not necessary to shew that Mr. GLOSSOP had

no license for the performance of plays. By a clause in the statute before cited, 10th Geo. II. c. 28. no such authority could be given by a license. The fifth section of that act provided against the representation of plays, either under letters patent or a license, in any part of Great Britain, except the city of Westminster, and the liberties thereof, or in those places where the royal residence might be fixed, and during the period of that residence only. It was therefore *impossible* that Mr. Glossop could possess any competent authority for the performance of plays, his Theatre being situated in the county of Surrey, to which neither letters patent nor license could extend. There was a later legal enactment, empowering magistrates to permit the performance of such plays as the proper authority had previously licensed, for sixty days, at and beyond twenty miles from London; but with that statute the present question had nothing whatever to do, and he should therefore proceed, after a few relevant observations, to the evidence upon which his case was supported.

He was instructed most explicitly to state, that against the *dramatis personæ* who performed on this occasion, not one of the prosecutors was actuated by resentment, or hostility. The question laid before the magistrates did not trench upon the feelings or convenience of these individuals, nor was it ever intended that it should do so. The *principle* alone stood at issue, and besides violating a positive statute, it would be further seen that the defendant had acted in direct opposition to a fiat of the privy council, which, when the question was solemnly brought before it whether a third Theatre should be opened in the metropolis, or not, decided against it, after minute enquiry, and mature deliberation.

Having thus referred to the law and facts upon which this information was founded, Mr. Pollock proceeded to evidence. The license of the Coburg Theatre was then read, which, in the usual terms, authorised John Joseph Glossop, James Jones, Thomas Serres, and James Dunn to exhibit entertainments of music and dancing for the public recreation.—

Here Mr. Adolphus took an objection *in limine* to the information. It charged only one individual, namely John Joseph Glossop, with the offence stated; whereas, from the license now produced by the prosecutors themselves, it appeared that he was one of *four* proprietors. He argued, therefore, that if the offence had been committed, at all, it was committed jointly with three other persons; and that

as those three persons were not included expressly in the information, it was defective, and ought to be quashed On the contrary, it was urged by Messieurs POLLOCK and TURTON, that the offence was several, as in the case of a common assault, and the magistrates assenting to this construction, the argument proceeded.

The witnesses being called, JOHN DOOBEY stated that he was an assistant in the box-office of Covent-garden Theatre; that he knew the Royal Coburg to be in the parish of St. Magdalen, in the County of Surrey; that he went there on the 29th of December last, saw a bill posted outside, and produced a copy of it, which he had purchased in the pit. This bill announced the melo-drame of "King Richard III.; or, the Battle of Bosworth-field," and the performance, which he witnessed, corresponded with the bill. There were a stage and scenery, and the actors appeared, as they did at Covent-garden. The interior of the house resembled altogether a Theatre. He could distinguish every part of the dialogue that was recited, and it corresponded very closely with the play of "King Richard III." as performed at Covent-garden. He had a book of the play in his hand, and marked the passages. Mr. BOOTH represented the *Duke of Gloster*, Mr. BARRYMORE the *Duke of Buckingham*, and Mr. HOWELL *Lord Stanley*. In the general character of the performance there was no variation from the manner in which it was conducted at Covent-garden. It was, in fact, the same entertainment. When cross-examined by Mr. ADOLPHUS, the witness declared that he had frequently seen the whole tragedy performed at Covent-garden. He had a book with him at the Coburg Theatre, in which he made crosses and lines, and marked the places at which music was played. The music was not *always* the same as at Covent-garden, though *sometimes* it was. For instance, when a flourish of trumpets was given at the entrances of the more distinguished performers, music was played at the entrance of *Gloster*.

Certain significant questions were then put and answered in the following manner:

Mr. ADOLPHUS. When *King Henry*, after he was stabbed by *Gloster*, says,—

O, and for much more slaughter after this—

was there music?

Mr. DOOBEY. No.

Mr. ADOLPHUS. Was there music when he says,

Just heaven forgive my sins, and pardon thee?

Mr. Doobey. No; I remember none.

Mr. Adolphus. When the scene of the murder of the children in the tower took place, was there music?

Mr. Doobey. Yes; I suppose, to drown their cries.

Mr. Adolphus. Is this scene exhibited at Covent-garden?

Mr. Doobey. No; the murder passes there behind the scenes.

Mr. Adolphus. But at the Coburg Theatre it was done before them?

Mr. Doobey. Yes.

Mr. Adolphus. At what time did you go to the Coburg Theatre, on the day you mentioned?

Mr. Doobey. At half past six o'clock.

Mr. Adolphus. How was it possible you could spare time to go then? You must have been wanted at Covent-garden, where the bills state that "overflowing houses" are perpetual.

Mr. Doobey. I was not wanted in the box-office, after that hour.

Mr. Pollock. Can you tax your memory with any speech in particular that was delivered upon this occasion?

Mr. Doobey. I heard Mr. Booth, in the part of *Gloster*, repeat these lines:

> Now is the winter of our discontent
> Made glorious summer by this sun of York.

The next witness was Mr. Junius Brutus Booth, the actor, who stated that he knew Mr. Glossop, as proprietor and manager of the Coburg Theatre. He saw that gentleman at the rehearsal of "King Richard III.," but received no instructions from him, as he merely uttered a common salutation. Mr. T. P. Cooke, the stage-manager, was also present at this rehearsal. He had been engaged by Mr. Glossop, in consequence of his own application, to perform in a melo-dramatized "King Richard III." That engagement, which he had not then about him, was in writing. It provided for twelve nights of performance, and allowed him a benefit on the thirteenth.

Mr. Chambers. What do you mean by a performance?

Mr. Booth. To recite speeches; to personate dramatic characters in a stage-dress.

Mr. Chambers. Then you are not engaged as a dancer?

Mr. Booth. *(with evident indignation)* No, sir, I am not engaged as a dancer.

Here Mr. ADOLPHUS objected to any inquiry upon the subject of this engagement, unless it was produced. The witness had declared it was not then in his possession, and it would be contrary to the "Statute of Bonds," to take evidence of the contents of a written deed, when the document itself might, by possibility, be brought forward. Mr. POLLOCK, on the contrary, insisted that the examination was perfectly correct. He did not mean to produce any evidence of the terms upon which this engagement was concluded; he did not even want to know them; but he certainly wished to show by the testimony of this witness, that Mr. GLOSSOP was proprietor of the Coburg Theatre, and in that capacity engaged him for theatrical performances.

Mr. BOOTH then proceeded to admit, that, in pursuance of this engagement, he attended a rehearsal at the Coburg Theatre, on the morning of Monday, December the twenty-seventh. He saw Messrs. SERRES and DUNN on the premises, and though he never had conversed with them upon the subject of his situation, he fully understood they were proprietors. Mr. DUNN was the Treasurer, and on his benefit furnished the returns of the house, but referred him to Mr. GLOSSOP for the payment of his money. This sum he received by a cheque from Mr. GLOSSOP on his banker; it was signed with Mr. GLOSSOP's name only. He had since that period made a fresh engagement with Mr. GLOSSOP and his partners, to commence at the ensuing Easter.

Mr. ALLWAY, on behalf of Mr. SEATON, deputy to the lord chancellor in the privy seal office, proved that he had searched the books, and found no letters patent given to Mr. GLOSSOP.

Here the case rested, for the prosecution, and Mr. ADOLPHUS, having risen to reply, expressed his satisfaction at ascertaining from the "prologue" of his learned opponent, that Mr. ELLISTON was not implicated with the prosecutors upon this eventful occasion. That gentleman would have appeared in such a character with peculiar disadvantage, as he had himself incurred the precise responsibility, in various instances of minor management, with which Mr. GLOSSOP was so deeply charged. That strenuous leader and eloquent champion of this very offence, had, at the Surrey Theatre, represented "Macbeth," the "Bold Stroke for a Wife," the "Beggar's Opera," and, above all, the identical piece now in question—"King Richard the Third." In him, therefore, it would have been remarkably ungracious to have stepped forward as the censurer of

that crime he had so often committed with equal perseverance and impunity.

Mr Elliston's success in his present undertaking could only result from a rare union of judgment and liberality; it could not be promoted by vindictive bitterness, or sordid vacillation, and he was therefore glad to acknowledge his absence from the list of less objectionable prosecutors. Who then were the virtual parties? They, forsooth, whose play-bills daily told the public their houses were so much "overflowed," that it would be expedient to "come early," not for the mere choice, but the absolute possession of places; they who had the merit, or ostentatiously claimed it, of producing new pieces which actually "convulsed and delighted" their respective audiences. These were the parties who came to annihilate Mr. Glossop and his little Theatre. The party reminded him of Caractus' appeal to the Romans,—"How can you, possessed of such splendour at home, envy me a little cottage in Britain?" The truth was, if Mr. Glossop had been told by these potent proprietors that the performance in question had injured their receipts, he would have given it up without a struggle. No intimation of that sort, however, was given, and the learned counsel proceeded therefore to argue, that the magistrates had constantly been in the habit of relaxing the severity of that statute on which the present information was founded. When originally passed, the suburban parts of Surrey were but thinly inhabited,—indeed, so poor in population, that if an exception in their favour had been asked for, it would hardly have been denied.

Since the year 1780, these relaxations had gradually increased, and so they still might safely do, as the magistrates licensing the Minor Theatres, were enabled to check or suppress them whenever it might be found necessary or expedient. Now, for the first time these forty years, the magistrates were told that their uniform practice was wrong and reprehensible; they were called on to convict Mr. Glossop at the suit of one Ward, who appeared in the new, and not very honorable post, of a public informer. It was admitted that music, on this occasion, was performed during the play; that circumstance could be proved, though said to be inaudible through the greater part of the house; he wished the prosecutors would profit by such a deficiency, and enable the "music" of the human voice to be heard in every nook of their capacious establishments. An allusion had been made to the proposal for a third Theatre, which was laid before the privy council. He attended on that

occasion, and understood that this plan was frustrated, because the council objected to its emanation from a joint-stock company. That obstacle, however, seemed to have been removed when one of the two winter Theatres was burned to the ground. It was said that no enmity actuated the prosecutors against Mr. GLOSSOP, as a private individual, though as the manager of a Theatre, they would ruin him with unscrupulous indifference. After some other observations, the learned advocate contended, that the magistrates should decide upon the objects of their license, when they gave it; that it was, to say the least of it, an inconsiderate thing to ask the two magistrates now acting, to undo the solemn act of the whole magistracy assembled at the session. The parties might, as the statute directed, have gone at once into a Court of Record. Mr. GLOSSOP did not wish to interfere with their just rights, but was determined to defend his own. That defence, for the present, he would rest upon a defect in the information, and after maintaining it at considerable length, he concluded by soliciting his client's acquittal.

Mr. CHAMBERS then observed, as the opinion of his colleague and himself, that under the statute, Mr. GLOSSOP's imputed offence was disjunctive; that the four proprietors might be individually sued for a separate penalty; and that evidence having gone to show that the defendant had caused the play of "King Richard III." to be performed without proper authority, for such performance he was liable to the penalty of £50.

A conviction was then recorded, against which Mr. GLOSSOP gave notice of an appeal to the Quarter Session, which he might think proper to remove, by *certiorari*, into the court of King's Bench.

NEWSPAPER VENALITY.

A bug in criticism, whose stench is more offensive than his sting.—SMOLLETT.

SOME People seem to be surprised that stupidity and malice should ever meet; but so far from being opposite qualities, they have, in many cases, a matrimonial alliance; and why, therefore, should we attempt to separate those whom the devil has united.

This admission will save us from the disagreeable duty of apologising for the bright combination of these valuable attributes that has lately appeared in a certain Sunday Newspaper, the columns of which are devoted, with remarkable avidity, to every subject between piety and pugilism, that can manifest its ignorance, or expose its presumption. This precious epitome of ungovernable rancour and audacious falshood, has levelled its popgun virulence at the pages of the "Inquisitor," and if any of our readers have seen GRIMALDI in a recent pantomime, when tickled, at a certain part, by the bayonets of his Lilliputian adversaries, the chuckle of that facetious character will acquaint them at once with the parallel nature of our secret sensations.

The "dignity," it seems, of this eminent Journal has been highly offended,* by our venturing, not many months ago, to drop a little hint upon the "motives" of its fulsome subservience to a distinguished aetor, whose merits we have always been eager to appreciate and acknowledge. To take umbrage at a circumstance of this kind, and term it, without ceremony, a personal insult, evinces that want of temper which, as a pitiable infirmity, demands no reply to its excesses, but toleration or contempt. If the private habits of any man have, apparently, an undue influence upon his public opinions, we are bound to trace those opinions, through every winding, to their remotest source, and should they be found to emanate from private familiarity, in lieu of public observation, we shall not shrink from dispassionate exposure, whenever such fallacious criticism can be held up to the just abhorrence of those it may have swayed and deluded.

Now, though we may fairly suspect that the Newspaper spoken of, is perfectly free from the delusion here described, still it behoves us, in pursuance of the feeling alluded to, to arraign its hypocrisy and unravel its subterfuge. The charge of social intercourse has been rebutted by the Editor, with great asperity, but, we here reduce our inuendo to a positive assertion, and say that our ill-mannered opponent *is* on terms of intimacy with Mr. KEAN, to whose reputation the fawning servility of such unsparing adherents has been of incurable disadvantage. If the fact is otherwise than we

* The Editor writes—"*arraigned*," but as we positively aver that the word, in its present application, is not available, he will perhaps permit us to preserve his "*dignity*," by exchanging it.

have stated it, let this tenacious stickler for "dignity," make a more dignified denial than can be comprehended in childish recrimination and vulgar scurrility.

Here, then, are the two points,—recrimination and scurrility,—upon which, with our gravest faces, we are invited to answer. Some one has asked, with an air of irresistible naiveté,—"Pray what animal is so troublesome or dangerous as a fool, whether he is your friend or your enemy?" This is a question that falls in our way at a most unlucky moment, for we begin to handle it already as an unconquerable adage. In short, gentle reader, to take this statue of "dignity" at once from his pedestal, we have a negative at hand for every accusation, and yet the "animal" has entangled his sophistries with so many filaments of the finest texture, that we hardly know how to use the very ample evidence before us, in refutation of his incredible calumny. The task, however, *shall* be performed, and in penetrating the recesses of domestic privacy, let it be remembered that we only pass through the avenue opened by this malignant intruder.

The very unfavourable light in which we were impelled to place the claims of Miss Byrne during the interval of her last engagement, has excited this Quixotic champion of ideal distresses, without contesting the justice of that condemnation, to impeach the purity of its motives. For the accomplishment of this *honourable* purpose, the following paragraph was resorted to, which, could its quotation be spared, we should not have inflicted upon the parties to whom it so grossly alludes :

— The editor of this publication is married to a singer who was engaged at Drury-lane not long [since. That she has not been engaged this season will probably account for the expression [of] "manegerial* cupidity," and the personal abhorrence of Mr. Elliston,† which this *impartial* young man be-

* Not manageriał, but absolutely as we have transcribed it. This redoubted editor, *as in a former instance*, will doubtless endeavour to throw his ignorance of orthography upon errors of the press, but the annexed examples of collateral failure, will probably prove that one of Pinnock's Spelling-books might be put into his hands with great advantage:

We cannot express our astonishment at his *effrontry*.—[effrontery.]

Again, to shew that the blunder resulted from positive ignorance:

First, as to the charge brought against Mr. KEAN of *effrontry*, artifice, and audacity.

When, lo! the *douty* [doughty] editor of the "Theatrical Inquisitor" presented himself, &c.

† There seems to be a most egregious mistake here in regard to Mr. Ellis-

trays every where throughout his last number. He confessed that he bepraised, and bespattered with sycophantic flattery, Miss BYRNE when she first came out, and owns that he did it for interested purposes. Well, he got what he wanted.

Her influence was known to be very great, at that time, in the Dublin Theatre, and his wife was engaged there. Miss BYRNE could then sing finely, alas! too finely for this gentleman to obtain all he wanted.* The Dublin audience would not allow his wife to take her place, and Miss BYRNE, on her return to Dublin, resumed her situation as principal singer. *Now we ask him to deny one syllable of all this.* Part of it we have taken out of his own mouth,† and part from the Irish Journals. Then surely every reader of common sense will conclude with us, that it is owing to this failure in an attempt to injure Miss BYRNE, on the part of his wife, that we owe the above insolent and insulting remarks.

Our "then," like your *if*, is sometimes a great peace-maker, for nothing else than such a summary could help this delectable Newspaper to its triumphant conclusion. In the first place, a most formidable oversight has been committed in identifying the Editor of this Magazine with one of its proprietors, but to waive so fatal an exception, and meet this challenger upon his chosen ground, we answer as follows:

The lady referred to as having been a member of the Drury-lane Company, left that establishment, *and the stage altogether, in June*, 1817, *one year and a quarter before it devolved upon* Mr. ELLISTON, from whom more than one application, by medium of Mr. REEVE, for engagement at the Olympic Theatre, was received and rejected. Thus much for the probability of his *abhorring* the new manager, because he withheld a situation that could not possibly be accepted.

As to any confession of *bepraising* Miss BYRNE, "when she first came out," it is one of the vilest blunders that a wrong-headed Irishman ever committed. The "Inquisitor," at that period, was conducted by a gentleman, now settled in Derbyshire,—who can be referred to, if required,—and for whose opinions no individual at present connected with it, is at all responsible. Under the auspices

TON, with whom the individual particularised, for any personal interruption it had yet received, must still enjoy the most perfect intimacy.

* And yet this immortal editor has just declared "that he got what he wanted!!!" Blessed fruits of a brilliant recollection!

† The immortal editor has done more than taken such a declaration *out* of our mouth, for he has even put it *in!*

of that gentleman's successor, a "Memoir" of Miss BYRNE was published in this miscellany;—to that document we regrettingly alluded, and as it was inserted *verbatim* from the copy transmitted by herself or her friends, Miss BYRNE can exonerate us from the imputation of that "sycophantic flattery" it has not been *our* lot to administer. We now entreat our readers most attentively to mark the following paragraphs, which are placed in juxtaposition for the sake of showing to what atrocious lengths the venality of a newspaper can be carried:

ACCUSATION.

Her [Miss BYRNE's] influence was known to be very great, at that time [in October, 1817] in the Dublin Theatre, and his wife was engaged there.

ANSWER.

In October, 1817, the lady alluded to was engaged at Drury-lane Theatre, where she and Miss BYRNE sung, during the whole season, in conjunction, and at the close were discharged together.

ACCUSATION.

The Dublin audience would not allow his wife to take her place, and Miss BYRNE, on her return to Dublin, [about October, 1818] resumed her situation as principal singer.

ANSWER.

The Dublin audience certainly did not allow the lady alluded to, *to take the place of* Miss BYRNE, for the following conclusive reason; because Miss BYRNE did not attempt the stage, *till nearly one year and a half after the lady alluded to had been engaged in the Dublin Theatre.* The latter individual having succeeded to the line of business held by Miss HUGHES, appeared as *Rosetta*, in November, 1815, and was engaged for Bath, in June, 1816; six months before Miss BYRNE had even commenced her theatrical career!!!

Here is our "denial" of not only *one* but *every* syllable contained in this infamous catalogue of unprincipled feelings, and to use the language of so paltry a libeller, we advise him to profit by the advice "once given to a notorious liar," and "take care never to tell an untruth that can be detected in less than four-and-twenty hours."

TO BE CONTINUED.

DESTRUCTION

OF THE

BIRMINGHAM THEATRE.

ON Friday morning January 7, about one o'clock, the town of

Birmingham was thrown into great alarm by the cry of "fire!" and on arriving at the spot from which it proceeded, the Theatre, in New-street, was found to be enveloped in flames. Though powerful assistance was promptly rendered, the whole structure, in about two hours, was reduced to a heap of ruins. No lives were lost in consequence of this deplorable calamity, but not an article of furniture or embellishment has been saved. The performance of the previous evening had been "Pizarro," and it is conjectured that musquet wadding, discharged in the course of that piece, must have occasioned the disaster. The Theatre was insured for £5000, part of which sum devolves upon Mr. Bunn, the manager, who must sustain a serious loss by this destruction of property. We hope it will warn him from pursuits of so unsuitable and precarious a nature.

Mr. Beazley, the dramatist, is engaged to rebuild this handsome edifice in a style of more than primitive splendor.

Correspondence.

ATTEMPT TO SUPPRESS THE MINOR DRAMA.

To the Editor of the Theatrical Inquisitor.

SIR—The very general and generous interest manifested by the public in the question now at issue between the Major and Minor Theatres, induces me once more to trespass on your pages with such observations as I consider necessary for the more perfectly entering into the merits of the case. This I feel enforced to do in gratitude to my friends and patrons for the good wishes evinced by them in my behalf, and would wish to do in kindness to my opponents, the patentees themselves, who appear by their proceedings to be in considerable doubt either as to the legality of the steps they are taking, or the course in which they should pursue them. To prove to those gentlemen, that as brother traders in the mines of intellect and talent, I can entertain no feeling of hostility towards them, the chief part of my observations will be addressed to them, for their own immediate well-doing, and I publish them at this moment, in the sincere hope, that before they commit themselves by taking any further steps, they will give them their serious reflection and deep

consideration. I will not here expend the legal argument with which I am provided, as it would perhaps be premature and unadvisable. I will go upon the ground of right, justice, propriety, expediency, and practability. In my previous letter I have shown the fallacy of their imputed grounds of complaint, by computation and comparison, and have accompanied my statement with such hasty remarks as then occurred to me, which statement and remarks, as they have not yet met with an answer, I take it for granted are unanswerable. But I will now divest myself of every *interested* feeling, regard the subject in a *moral* and *national* point of view, and contemplate the operation of the measures they would carry, as affecting the welfare of the complainants themselves. Writers of every class, ancient and modern, polite, philosophical, moral, and religious, have invariably declared a well-governed stage to be at once an ornament and benefit to society, and CERVANTES, through the medium of "Don Quixote," who has as much meaning in his madness, as the patentees seem to have madness in their meaning, declares, that the intent of all well-governed commonwealths in permitting public plays to be acted, is to entertain the common people with some honest recreation, in order to divert those bad humours which idleness usually engenders, and that after having seen an artful and well-digested play represented, the hearer will go away delighted with the comic parts, instructed by the serious, and agreeably surprised by the incidents; collecting information from the dialogue, precaution from the deceits of the fable, experience from the examples exhibited, affection for virtue, and indignation for vice. I the more readily quote the authority of "Don Quixote," as in their late task of pantomiming that ingenious work, the patentees of one of the Royal Theatres must at least be familiar with its pages, and I would not willingly call too deeply on their erudition. If then, the proper representation of dramatic performances, be pregnant with such beneficial consequences to mankind, is it not essentially necessary that the number of Theatres for the representation of such productions should increase in proportion to the increase of population, by which they are frequented? And if such representations were originally permitted to divert the multitude from the bad humours of idleness, to instruct and forewarn, encourage affection for virtue, and indignation for vice, is there not tenfold reason for their being suffered now, when *demoralizing principles*, and *infidel sentiments* are, through the arts of designing men,

so industriously and fearfully circulating in every part of the town? Every well-wisher to social order, and the happiness of the community at large, must in times like these, trebly rejoice that there are places of public resort, where through the medium of amusement, such insidious doctrines are effectually combatted by the personification of pieces inculcating sentiments totally opposite, stimulating and producing a love of loyalty, order, and morality, will readily agree with me, that such structures are more essential bulwarks to the state, than either batteries or battalions, and will view with surprise and disgust, any attempt that shall now be made to suppress them. The patenteed proprietors will perhaps answer here, that they do not wish totally to put down the Minor Theatres, they only essay to reduce them to their original state of barbarism and nothingness; were they to accomplish that, they would more effectually suppress them, than if they were to close the doors at once. Such vast inroads have been made lately on those regions of refinement and kingdoms of knowledge which have hitherto been exclusively possessed and enjoyed by the rich, that pieces which were received with the greatest success ten years since, when revived in later days, have been hooted off the stage with all the indignity they deserved. It may, perhaps, surprise the patentees of the Royal Theatres, when I tell them, the audiences that now support and frequent the Minor Theatres, are to the full as nice and critical as their own, and could I be capable of offering to them any production containing passages inimical to the interests of good order, morality, and decency, they would receive them with their merited scorn and reprobation,. The benefits derived from the increase and improvement of the Minor Theatres have been strongly felt and acknowledged by the intelligent magistrates, who have encouraged with their licenses such increase and improvement. The public-house broils that nightly disturbed our streets, and the excessive indulgence of drinking, attended with such fatal results, are now nearly done away with, owing to that amusement and improvement afforded by the Minor Theatres. I am prepared to prove too, that were the Major and Minor Theatres indiscriminately allowed to do their best, it would tend more effectually to the improvement of the drama, than all that criticism and monopoly might attempt. In the augustan age of dramatic literature,—the golden days of ELIZABETH,—when SHAKSPEARE, JONSON, MASSINGER, and BEAUMONT and FLETCHER, were cotemporary stars in the theatrical hemisphere, there

were more Theatres open than there are now, all performing the same species of entertainment. The Bankside, the Curtain, the Globe, the Red Bull, &c. &c. &c. emulated with each other in the production of excellence. But from the moment the puritanical prejudice of the times shut up those Theatres, and private interest produced a monopoly of theatrical talent, the twin stars of mimic sisters waxed dim, and never to this hour have regained their pristine splendour; and were the patentees to shut up the Minor Theatres, how would they act with regard to the mass of talent which would by that step be withdrawn from the public? Do they imagine that the public would tolerate such a system of persecution, exclusion, and exile? Would they not desire and call for the appearance of their old favourites? Undoubtedly. If the patentees are sceptical on this point, let them remember the enthusiasm with which every exiled favourite of the public has been received and followed whenever he has made his appearance at a Minor Theatre. I question if the tumult of approbation which attended every performance of Mr. Booth, is not still ringing in their ears. They will here say, probably, when you are shut up, to conciliate the public indignation, we will engage those persons we may conceive are favourites with them. What, add them to your already overcharged lists, and still further increase those improvident burthens, which alone have been the cause of your distresses, and not the attraction of mine and similar Theatres? As we have been advancing in improvement, you have been retrograding, and even for our advance, you have to censure yourselves. It was not till you availed yourselves of all our *then* attractions,—real water, elephants, posture-masters, monkeys, &c. &c. that we attempted to shift our ground, and in mere self-defence, resort to common-sense and talent for assistance, and I repeat, that we have gone too long and too far for you to ask us to recede. It would be an outrage on the intellectual character of the nation, an injury to public order and christian morality, were you to force us back to ribaldry, nonsense, scrolls, and orchestra tinklings. The editor of the "Examiner," who has done me the honour to express his approbation of my first letter, supposes that in answer to my just remonstrances, you will turn the *Shylock* on me, and call out for your "pound" of orchestra. "The public," he adds, "have now long had reason to see the folly of such monopolies, which ought to be done away with, if it is only to secure a proper emulation in administering to the common pleasure;"

that he thinks the justice of the case on my side, and when he says that, he says every thing.—Let the Patentees also peruse the "British Gazette." "It is the mischief of monopoly," it remarks, "to induce an illiberality very foreign to the feelings of the individuals." This it proves by instancing Mr. ELLISTON being about to "*sanction* the conduct of which he ably and effectually complained, when directed against himself;" and observes, "surely neither Drury-lane nor Covent-garden will admit that Mr. BOOTH surpasses both KEAN and MACREADY: if they do not admit this, then why interdict his performance at another Theatre, when they refused him themselves? Let the patentees answer this."

My remarks have extended to such a length, that I am unable to urge several material points I had contemplated. On a future occasion I may have the honour of submitting them to the public through your magazine, and will now beg to conclude, by simply asking my opponents in the able language of the "British Gazette," whether, as the Minor Theatres are essential nurseries for talent, and necessary refuges for a respectable mediocrity, it is honourable to wage war against such establishments, to envy the guide of talent in its infancy, and its support in old age?

Excellence should be above envy, and greatness above persecution. Distress may attack every establishment, but never should lead it to dishonour.

I am, sir, your obedient servant,

J. GLOSSOP.

Jan. 12, 1820. Proprietor of the Royal Coburg Theatre.

IMPUTED UNFAIRNESS OF THE NEWSPAPERS.

WE give insertion to the following letter from Mr. NATHAN, without embarking in the sentiments he seems to entertain of those by whom his début at Covent-garden Theatre was recently derided. Should he bring his pretensions to another ordeal, we candidly admit that our own anticipations will be pleasantly thwarted by any evidence of their success.

To the Editor of the Theatrical Inquisitor.

SIR—Since the papers of Monday last have overwhelmed me with a deluge of severities, I take the liberty of appealing to the candour and liberality of kindred minds, for the intrusion of a few considerations, which possibly may serve to palliate the bitterness of prejudice, and account for the humiliation to

which *calamity*, so tauntingly *misrepresented*, or *self satisfaction*, has reduced me. Upon the score of that worldly "inconvenience and distraction" which hurried me to the tribunal of a London Theatre, I have to plead a sacred excuse in the persons of a most amiable wife and four young children. To explain at full the visitations of Divine Providence which have left me naked upon the world, is neither a duty I owe the public, or an outrage I am disposed to offer my own feelings. One cloud, however, to the prosperity of life, I will venture to name, and that is, an impaired state of health, which, I am assured by my medical advisers, results, in a great measure, from intense application to professional study, in the several departments of which I have been a teacher no less than *thirteen years*: and having had the gratification to find my pupils esteemed for their style and instructions, I was led to judge accordingly of the extent and compass of my voice; and although doubtful in the extremest degree of its power, I have been encouraged, by numerous scientific musicians, to believe my style would not fail to please, since, by comparison with that of several esteemed masters, under whom I studied in the early part of my life, I cannot forsake all claims to originality; and with this impression I applied to the author of "The Bee Hive," and to Mr. MONCRIEFF, so well known in the dramatic world, to write an Opera, for which I might have composed music in my own style, and as far as I was personally concerned, adapted to the compass of my voice. I must disclaim altogether the idle enmity of wishing to place myself in competition with my esteemed friend, Mr. BRAHAM, since it was for the convenience and economy of the Theatre only, that I ventured upon the character of *Henry Bertram*. And it is declared by every person who chose to exercise the sense of sight, that what I felt too acutely, I appeared more than sufficiently; namely, *quite dispossessed of myself*. If the stanza sung behind the scenes had the good fortune to please, it may reasonably be concluded that the same voice would have been more impressive where the radiation of sound was not interrupted by canvass, if exerted to its fullest power. I was not disposed to excite the commiseration of the audience by a statement, that in addition to extreme mental agitation, I was in great bodily pain from an unhealed blister between my shoulders, and a troublesome application on my chest, from which circumstance alone it may be concluded that I had great difficulty to resist the importunities of my medical advisers, to withhold my first effort, at least for a time. But on Friday night I found my health and voice so much better than they had been for a great length of time, that the notice of my appearance was not withdrawn; yet, as if an evil planet shed its influence upon me, the whole of Saturday, from the moment of my leaving my bed to that of setting off for the Theatre, I was troubled by a confused accession of mental inconveniences and bodily exertions, which would have left the most healthy person unfit for any kind of business in the evening. The idle accusation of "intrepidity," which has been charged on me, bears too much the colour of prejudice to be dwelt on; and as to personal deformity, though I had never the blindness to imagine symmetry an attribute of my person, I confess myself vain enough to believe that, however rudely, I am still "formed after the image of man," and weak enough to believe with the bard of Avon, that even a monster, such as *Caliban*, may dread the burden of oppression and the stings of torture. If a beam of mercy from the public mind

remains to cheer the darkness I have been plunged into, the Manager of Covent-garden Theatre permits me to make another effort on his boards in the character of *Macbeath*, which, with all respect to the public, I will venture on, hoping that no private feelings will be exercised to my prejudice, and begging it may be remembered that indifferent acting is sometimes endured in the individual who only professes singing.

I have the honour to be, sir,

Your obedient and humble servant,

No. 10, Panton-square, Haymarket. I. NATHAN.

General Review.

Impartial Observations on the Proceedings instituted by the Proprietors of the Theatres Royal, Drury-lane, and Covent-garden, against the Minor Establishments. *8vo. pp.* 33, *price* 1*s.*—Boys.

THE despots of the stage have found a congenial advocate in the author before us, whose pamphlet is an unqualified apology for the monopolizers of dramatic amusement. Their procrastinated attempt to suppress the Minor Drama, is treated as a step of unavoidable necessity, as " they have been convinced that its encroachments, if unrepelled, would find no end but in the extinction of their own establishments," so awkward is the compliment they pay to public taste, or such is the admitted *inferiority* of their protected attractions.

To give the writer of this admirable essay a fair scope for his luminous endeavours, we shall transcribe the first of his incipient paragraphs upon which the merest shadow of an argument has been founded :

The *legal* question, in this case, need not occupy a moment, The point has already, in more than one instance, been most fully and clearly *decided*.*

* In the year 1787, in the case of the Royalty Theatre, when Delpini and Bannister, sen. were convicted under the statute of the 10th of George II.; which conviction was confirmed, upon subsequent application to the Court of King's Bench.

Again, in the year 1791, in the case of the Royal Circus, when Palmer and Barratt were convicted under the same Act; which conviction was afterwards confirmed, upon appeal to the magistrates at the quarter-sessions.

Also in the case of Macready, at the Royalty Theatre; in the case of the Pantheon; and in other instances.

It is perfectly well understood by all persons who are conversant with the statutes under which places of public entertainment are licensed and regulated, that the establishments called Astley's Amphitheatre, the Circus, Sadler's Wells, the Coburg Theatre, the Royalty Theatre, and the Regency Theatre, are merely houses licensed from year to year, by the magistrates of the district, for entertainments of music and dancing; that they have no pretence even for designating themselves as Theatres; that they have no authority for any thing in the nature of scenic representation; that their conduct, at the present period, subjects them every hour to various heavy pains and penalties;* and that their abuses, increasing from day to day, have only continued during so long a period, inasmuch as that they have been tolerated by the parties interested in suppressing them.

At law, the Minor Theatres can have no defence.

It is certainly a very comfortable assurance, that "the *legal* question," in this case, needs not occupy a moment; and yet we are so perversely bent on worrying ourselves with an opposite inference, that some latitude must be allowed us for the statement of a few objections. The "legal question" is here so imperfectly defined, that whether it turns upon the rights possessed by certain theatrical proprietors to vindicate their establishments against "*extinction*," or proclaims the utter illegality of any *prosperous* effort being made by the Minor managers to uphold their respective institutions, we are puzzled to conceive, and unable to explain. Taking the "legal question," however, according to its probable, though not apparent meaning,—if this *Impartial Observer* has ventured to assert that the recent measures adopted† must *inevitably* be followed by unqualified success, we shall take the liberty to laugh at his ignorance and disprove his opinion.

That "*a* point, has already, in more than one instance been decided" against the Minor Theatres, we implicitly admit; but whether *the* specific question at present to be settled, exhibits precisely the same features of innovation, and therefore demands the same measure of restraint, if not enabled to deny, we feel ourselves empowered to inquire.

In the case of the Royalty Theatre, it should be remembered that *two* magistrates refused to sanction the vexatious proceedings

* By the statute of the 10th of George II., for performing entertainments of the stage, without sufficient license or authority, to a fine of 50l. for each offence; and to other penalties.¶

† Against Mr. Glossop's Theatre.

¶ This is incorrect. Provided the £50 are paid, no *other penalties* can be imposed.

adopted against DELPINI and BANNISTER, and were so confirmed in the legality of that refusal, as to persist in arousing the resentment of superior and more inimical authority. PALMER, it must also be remarked, opened, under a most egregious mistake, with one of SHAKSPEARE'S plays, presuming that the license extended by the Lord Lieutenant of the Tower, and the district Justices in conjunction, was sufficient to authorize the performance of any regular drama. The late Mr. COLMAN expressly pleaded this unhappy error as the sole cause of his opposition to PALMER'S undertaking, and till the incompetence of that patronage was fathomed and exposed, the confederate managers were clearly correct in their measures of abstract litigation, though not of attendant severity.

At this very Theatre, an entertainment *founded on*, and *taken from*, SHAKSPEARE'S play of the "Tempest," was afterwards acted with impunity, *when* Mr. PALMER *had adapted the spirit of his exhibitions to the parliamentary enactment under which they were opened.* This, gentle reader, is the parallel aspect of the two instances, and, for the present, we shall leave thee to decide upon our propriety in contesting the results of that "legal question," which the *Impartial Observer* has so felicitously arranged.

We do not pretend to consider ourselves as among the persons elect, who are so perfectly "conversant with the statutes under which places of public entertainment are licensed and regulated," as to discover that none of the lesser "*Houses*, licensed from year to year by the magistrates of the district, for entertainments of singing and dancing," have even the slightest pretences "for designating themselves as *Theatres*;" because *such a term is by no means dependant upon "scenic representation."* The frequent and familiar usage of the word, THEATRE—for literary, medical, and other purposes, affords ample evidence of our author's fallacy in coercing it, and allows us, without further observation, to continue our "legal" remarks.

"*Scenic Representation*," we are inclined to believe, however essential to dramatic beauty, is by no means entitled to rank among its component parts, upon the ground of not having been appropriated to *Entertainments of the Stage*, at that period, when the Patents bestowed upon DAVENANT and KILLIGREW were adjudged to their respective possessors. Movable scenes, it is generally allowed, were introduced, from Parisian models, at a subsequent

period, the stage being furnished at the time of these grants in a style of uncouth rudeness, and squalid poverty.

The representation of scenes is neither specified nor awarded in the Patents alluded to; and though unsanctioned by the statutes under which "Houses" are licensed for music and dancing, we may remark that there is no caveat against their being interwoven with such amusements as the magistrates may think proper to allow. Suppose Mr. MATHEWS, for instance, were to embellish his brilliant recitations with a series of scenic pictures, would any man be authorised to assert that such a performance, on that account only, must become at once a *common* entertainment of the stage? Most assuredly not, because the acts framed for the suppression of unlicensed players, imply a direct infringement of those pieces which the Patent Theatres are in the habit of performing, independent of the decorations with which they are assisted and adorned.

These are, then, untenable positions, and thus far it will perhaps be admitted that the reasoning of this *Impartial Observer* has been refuted in its strongest points; and yet, with the deepest aversion to managerial monopoly, we are compelled to admit that, in abler hands, the mere question of *legal* authority might and must have been settled to its implicit advantage. We feel this to be a cruel disclosure, yet such is our veneration for the value of truth, that no motives, however urgent, can lead us to weaken its preponderance, or diminish its glory.

In the year 1662, to reward the services of Sir WILLIAM DAVENANT and THOMAS KILLIGREW, Esq. King CHARLES the Second awarded his Letters Patent to each of those individuals, by virtue of which they were empowered to "erect, new-build, and set up one Theatre, or play-house," respectively, upon the establishment of which "all other company or companies" were declared to be "silenced and suppressed." In the twelfth year of the reign of Queen ANNE, an act was passed "*for reducing the laws relating to rogues, vagabonds, sturdy beggars, and vagrants, into one act of parliament; and for the more effectual punishing such rogues, &c. and sending them whither they ought to be sent,* AS RELATES TO COMMON PLAYERS OF INTERLUDES;" which act, being found to want explanation and amendment, was enforced in the tenth year of GEORGE the Second, by a statute to the following effect:*

* The history and origin of this act are extremely curious, and will justify

—— Now for explaining and amending the same, be it declared and enacted by the King's most Excellent Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Lords spiritual and temporal, and Commons, in this present Parliament assembled, and by the authority of the same, That, from and after the twenty-fourth day of June, one thousand, seven hundred, and thirty-seven, every person who shall, for hire, gain, or reward, act, represent, or perform, or cause to be acted, represented, or performed, any Interlude, Tragedy, Comedy, Opera, Play, Farce, or other Entertainment of the Stage, or any part or parts therein, in case such person shall not have any legal settlement in the place where the same shall be acted, represented, or performed, without authority by virtue of Letters Patent from his Majesty, his heirs, successors, or predecessors, or without License from the Lord Chamberlain of his Majesty's houshold for the time being, shall be deemed to be a rogue and a vagabond within the intent and meaning of the said recited act, and shall be liable and subject to all such penalties and punishments, and by such methods of conviction, as are inflicted on, or appointed by the said act for the punishment of, rogues and vagabonds who shall be found wandering, begging, and misordering themselves, within the intent and meaning of the said recited act.

II. And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, That, if any person having or not having a legal settlement as aforesaid, shall, without such authority or license as aforesaid, act, represent, or perform, or cause to be acted, represented, or performed, for hire, gain, or reward, any Interlude, Tragedy, Comedy, Opera, Play, Farce, or other Entertainment of the Stage, or any part or parts therein, every such person shall for every such offence forfeit the sum of fifty pounds; and in case the said sum of fifty pounds shall be paid, levied, or recovered, such offender shall not for the same offence suffer any of the pains or penalties inflicted by the said recited act.

The third, fourth, and fifth clauses of this act are omitted, as they relate entirely to the power of license and prohibition which the Lord Chamberlain was, at this period, invested with over the Patent Theatres.

VI. And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, That all the pecu-

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a compendious recapitulation.

To relieve himself from the difficulties in which he was involved, and probably to retaliate for certain indignities that had been thrown upon him by the people in power, that admirable novelist, HENRY FIELDING, in the year 1735, collected a troop of actors at the Haymarket Theatre, denominated them the Great Mogul's Company of Comedians, and brought out his dramatic satire, called "Pasquin," which was speedily followed by the "Historical Register." In those pieces he held up certain persons of high rank, and great influence in the political world, to public ridicule, conduct which the ministry resented with such warmth, as to prevent any similar attacks for the future. In short, by fearless encroachment and corrupt influence, Sir ROBERT WALPOLE passed the celebrated *Licensing Act*, notwithstanding much eloquent opposition to so arbitrary, odious, and oppressive a measure.

niary penalties inflicted by this act for offences committed within that part of Great Britain called England, Wales, and the town of Berwick-upon-Tweed, shall be recovered by bill, plaint, or information, in any of his Majesty's Courts of Record at Westminster, in which no essoin, protection, or wager of law shall be allowed; and for the offences committed in that part of Great Britain called Scotland, by action or summary complaint before the Court of Session or Justiciary there; or for offences committed in any part of Great Britain, in a summary way before two Justices of the Peace for any county, stewartry, riding, division, or liberty where any such offence shall be committed, by the oath or oaths of one or more credible witness or witnesses, or by the confession of the offender: the same to be levied by distress and sale of the offender's goods and chattels, rendering the overplus to such offender, if any there be above the penalty and charge of such distress; and for want of sufficient distress the offender shall be committed to any house of correction in any such county, stewartry, riding, or liberty, for any term not exceeding six months, there to be kept to hard labour, or to the common gaol of any such county, stewartry, riding, or liberty, for any term not exceeding six months, there to remain without bail or mainprize; and if any person or persons shall think him, her, or themselves aggrieved by the order or orders of such justices of the peace, it shall and may be lawful for such person or persons to appeal therefrom to the next general quarter-sessions to be held for the said county, stewartry, riding, or liberty, whose order therein shall be final and conclusive; and the said penalties for any offence against this act shall belong, one moiety to the informer or person suing or prosecuting for the same, the other moiety to the poor of the parish where such offence shall be committed.

The seventh clause prohibits acting "in any house or place where wine, ale, beer, or other liquors shall be sold or retailed," under similar penalties and punishments; and the eighth and last provides for the limitation of actions against Justices or other persons, which must be commenced "within six kalendar months next after the fact done," allows the general issue to be pleaded, and gives treble costs to the defendant or defendants, in case the plaintiff, or plaintiffs, or prosecutor, shall become nonsuit, or shall not prosecute his or their said suit or action.

Thus then it will be clearly seen that the Minor Theatres, *at law*, are strictly indefensible, but the writer of this pamphlet at once abandons the weapons he had so boldly assumed, and puts his quarrel on the footing of policy and expedience. His own words will furnish this admission to the utmost, and we shall therefore take the liberty to profit by another quotation.

But it is not enough, in such a case as this, that the law should be satisfied. There is an authority which stands above the law: the voice which has power to enact, has power to repeal; and it is not upon the letter of an existing act

of parliament, that a question of moment will eventually depend. The public have a right to be made parties to this suit. The public *must*, in the end, be the judges who are to decide it. Public opinion, important upon every question, in any contest between theatrical establishments becomes irresistible; and unless the Proprietors of the Theatres Royal, Drury-lane and Covent-garden, can distinctly show that the proceedings which they have commenced against the Minor Theatres, are founded equally upon justice and necessity, their victory at law would, in effect, amount to a defeat.

We compliment the writer of these lines upon the truth they have emitted, and most sincerely thank him for the opportunity they afford of bringing this important question to the only issue by which it must eventually abide. Such an admission leads to the very path he has marked out, and if it can be proved that the legitimate drama, for representing which the Patent Theatres *ought* to have been exclusively constituted, is shackled in its operation, or robbed of its effect, by the course at present pursued in the Minor Establishments, we shall accede to his evident object, and admit that such institutions should be rigorously restrained, as destructive of those great *moral* ends it is necessary to preserve. Here, however, we begin to diverge from our critical conductor, and in lieu of looking at "the condition of the metropolitan Theatres," as a just limit for our excursive remarks, we feel intitled to scrutinize their origin, progress, and present state, as a fair means of forming such *criteria* as the subject appears to demand.

By the Licensing Act, in 1737, it seems to have been fully considered that theatrical exhibitions were capable of leading the public mind, in an eminent degree, to many of its most portentous sensations. On the grounds of this imputed influence, it was subjected to control, for the purposes of being purified from every sentiment that could impugn the rigid dictates of decency and order.

Have our two "National Theatres," groaning under the greatness of that title, made such an expectation the unremitting guide of their conduct, by abstaining from entertainments of senseless splendour, and arrant puerility? Have they made the cultivation of public intellect, or of public virtue their especial care,—seeking to wean it from the inferior allurements of such theatrical trash as we have just described? If, indeed, they have cherished the early springings of decorum by judicious precept, or fortified a maturer bias to propriety by brilliant example, we should strive in vain to keep them from the smiles of encouragement, or the arm of power; but before we proceed to lavish our encomium, and proffer our support,

let us briefly advert to the statement upon which their pretensions are founded.

The Theatre Royal, Drury-lane, it seems, has just emerged from a state of bankruptcy, having, in eight years, sustained a loss of ninety thousand pounds. In the mean-time, its Covent-garden rival barely afforded a fair recompense to the managers for the exertion of their talents, and the employment of their capital. A general depression of theatrical property is deduced from this period of disaster, and that depression being unequivocally ascribed to the increase of Minor amusements, it becomes necessary to ascertain upon what species of performance they have infringed, and how far the Patent Theatres,—relinquishing their legal rights,—have a plea to be protected.

TO BE CONTINUED.

Original and Select Poetry.

THE MANAGER'S ADDRESS.

To the Editor of the Theatrical Inquisitor.

MR. EDITOR,—The following versification of a late celebrated address to the audience at Drury-lane Theatre, by the Grand Turk of that establishment, is supposed to have been the production of his Poet Laureat, the immortal translator of Lucretius. It has ben sung with great applause, by both Sancho Panzas at various private parties, and is therefore submitted to the Public, through the medium of your excellent magazine, by their and your

Short's Gardens, Drury-lane,
February 11, 1820.

Most obedient servant,
Q IN THE CORNER.

Kind ladies and gentlemen, 'tis my intent
Competition so needless and loud to prevent;
And since down your throats you will not have it cramm'd,
Allow me to tell you the comedy's damn'd.
Derry down, &c.

Believe me, I feel for the author sincerely,
And think you have treated him much too severely;
To write a good play is a difficult thing,
But to judge of one harder—as proof I will bring.
Derry down, &c.

I have written a play*—bad enough I'll allow,
Still written it is, and so no matter how;
But since every piece I bring out meets a fall,
It proves pretty plainly, I'm no judge at all.
Derry down, &c.

I've said it, ye critics—aye, growl if ye will,
I repeat it, "to judge of one's much harder still;"
I speak from experience and regular rules;
If you don't think as I do you're all of you fools.
Derry down, &c.

To genius and talent my doors open ever,—
I can't help our differing as to what's clever;
'Twas always my practice to blow my own trumpet,
So if you don't like it, egad, you must lump it.
Derry down, &c.

But just to rub off as I go—a committee
Is sitting to solace the poor in the city;
So next Thursday I'll generously give them the pelf
That may chance to remain when I've well paid myself.
Derry down, &c.

SONG.

O tell me not a sun will break
Above my path, and gild its way,
That where I tread the flowers will wake,
And woo the sunny beam to stay.

No, there's a cold and hovering cloud
Approaching, o'er my fate to cast
A sullen gloom, a deathly shroud,
And mar each beam of brightness past.

Yet has this heart a secret string,
That can be touch'd, and touch'd so truly,

* The intelligent reader, on referring to the original prose effusion, will find that no proof of this kind was brought forward in support of the opinion, but the sagacious and friendly Doctor perceived, and supplied the deficiency, with the above most incontrovertible argument. The play alluded to must be "The Venetian Outlaw," a drama in three acts, dedicated, by permission, to his late Majesty.

My soul seems ready to take wing,
As birds that have been feather'd newly.

And while the dear vibration lives,
With all its soft celestial sweetness,
The heart it wakes, almost forgives,
To sullen fate, its magic fleetness.

And while I deem that life will yield,
At intervals, so bright a minute;
I'll brave the strife, that strews the field,
And spurn the foes I may meet in it.

M. LEMAN REDE.

TO L****

In vain thy tongue reproof conveys,
Which thy dimpling cheeks deride;
While thy laughing eye betrays
The love, thou vainly triest to hide.

No: in that face thy thoughts are seen,
Bright and pure by nature given;
As nightly in the lake serene,
Gleam the perfect lights of Heaven.

NEVIL.

Theatrical Inquisition.

Hic patet ingeniis campus: certusque merenti
Stat favor: ornatur propriis industria donis.—CLAUDIAN.

KING'S THEATRE.

FEB. 19. Cenerentola; Panurge.
22. Ibid; Ibid.

CENERENTOLA.

WE have as warm an attachment to the "concord of sweet sounds," as the most musical of our contemporaries, though that attachment has not recently been evinced by the marked and minute attention which the interests of this Theatre have a right to demand. The

most pleasant moments we are permitted to abstract from imperious employment, are found within the verge of an Italian opera; it is a speck of bright and balmy greenness amid the bleak desert of dreary occupation, on which Hope is delighted to build her soft visions of joyous futurity.

The productions of Rossini have been visited in this country with a degree of harshnesss or neglect which argues but weakly for that predominating taste we are anxious to ascribe. The "Cenerentola," with all its deficiences of fable and diction, is borne up by undrooping vigour, and we challenge the most fastidious protester against Rossini's fame, to deduce the positive effect of this barren drama from any other source, than that of its composer's deep erudition, and luxuriant fancy.

The *Don Magnifico* of Signor Ambrogetti is such a performance as the boards of our own metropolitan stage have, perhaps, never been adorned with. In exhaustless gaiety, unbridled humour, and infallible judgment, it may be held out as a model to histrionic imitation, and we sincerely wish it would serve to generate a species of ability, in which the British drama is prescriptively wanting.

THEATRE ROYAL DRURY-LANE.

Jan. 25. Coriolanus—*Caius Marcius*, Mr. Kean; *Titus Lartius*, Mr. Thompson; *Cominius*, Mr. Hamblin; *Menenius Agrippa*, Mr. Gattie; *Sicinius Velutus*, Mr. Holland; *Junius Brutus*, Mr. Powell; *Tullus Aufidius*, Mr. Penley; *Volusius*, Mr. Barnard; *Volumnia*, Mrs. Glover; *Virgilia*, Mrs. Robinson; *Valeria*, Mrs. Knight;—High Notions.
26. Ibid; Jack and the Bean-Stalk.
27. Siege of Belgrade; Highland Reel. (*Miss* Byrne's *Night.*)
28. Coriolanus; Jack and the Bean-Stalk.
29. Wild Oats; Ibid.*

Feb. 17. Epicedium, Odes, and Sacred Music.
18. No Performance.
19. Siege of Belgrade—*Leopold*, Mr. Russell; *Lilla*, Madame Vestris;—Jack and the Bean-Stalk.
21. Richard the Third; Ibid.
22. Coriolanus; Ibid.
23. Oratorio.
24. Siege of Belgrade; Jack and the Bean-Stalk.

* Performances suspended till after his Majesty's funeral.

SIEGE OF BELGRADE.

SATURDAY, *February* 19.—Madame VESTRIS, a grand-daughter, we believe, of the famous BARTOLOZZI, has made her appearance in the part of *Lilla*, with much immediate success, and though the popular dictate is not always to be relied on, we think in this instance it will bear the test of confirmation. Though we cannot pay Madame VESTRIS, at this moment, the meed of proper attention, we are anxious for her professional welfare, and feel considerable apprehension that her efforts have been injured by some Italian teacher of English music, who neither knows nor cares about the due degree of accuracy with which her songs should be invested. Should this be the case, we intreat her to throw off the bondage of such worthless tuition, and appeal, if necessary, to the lessons of a more suitable master.

ORATORIO.

WEDNESDAY, *February* 23.—To Sir GEORGE SMART, the Drury-lane Oratorios, not many seasons since, were indebted for the restitution of those honours which imbecile management had most disgracefully surrendered. Having continued to maintain that reputation his talents established, by scientific research and unshaken alacrity, Sir GEORGE has been again selected for the arduous task of directing these entertainments,—a task he seems determined to fulfil without the slightest abatement of his well-known zeal, diligence, and discrimination.

We have but little room, at this late period, to expatiate upon the various claim by which excellence has been developed, and encomium is demanded. The performers of every class are distinguished by a great share of public favour, and their respective efforts on the present occasion, by adding to the evidence of their merit, will heighten the lustre of their fame. The pre-eminence of Madame BELLOCHI and Mr. BRAHAM, was displayed with peculiar success, and they were strongly supported by Miss GOODALL, Miss POVEY, and Miss M. TREE. The instrumental portions of this admirable concert, were marked by that delicate precision which conduces, exclusively, to powerful effect; and the chorusses were hailed with that evidence of unmingled delight, which is rarely elicited by compositions of that nature, however grand in their essence, or complete in their delivery.

Beethoven's beautiful symphony, describing the origin, progress, and result of the battle at Vittoria, was again heard with that delight which so unparalleled an effort cannot fail to arouse. The house was well attended, and there cannot be a doubt that these oratorios will meet with proper support.

THEATRE ROYAL, COVENT-GARDEN.

Jan. 25. Antiquary—*Jonathan Oldbuck*, Mr. Liston; *Caxon*, Mr. Blanchard; *Lovel*, Mr. Duruset; *Sir Arthur Wardour*, Mr. Chapman; *Edie Ochiltree*, Mr. Emery; *Lord Glenallan*, Mr. Terry; *Hector M'Intyre*, Mr. Abbott; *Lieutenant Taffril*, Mr. Connor; *Saunders Mucklebackit*, Mr. Farley; *Isabella Wardour*, Miss Stephens; *Maria M'Intyre*, Miss Matthews; *Grizelda Oldbuck*, Mrs. Davenport; *Elspeth*, Mrs. Faucit;—Roland for an Oliver.
26. Ibid: Harlequin and Don Quixote.
27. Ibid; Ibid.
28. Ibid; Ibid.
29. Ibid; Ibid.*
Feb. 17. Antiquary; Rosina.
18. Oratorio.
19. Antiquary; Bon Ton.
21. Comedy of Errors; Harlequin and Don Quixote.

ISABELLA.

SATURDAY, *January* 22.—We omitted in our last number, from the pressure of more material subjects, to notice the début of a Mrs. De Jersey Beaumont, as the heroine of this tragedy. It was a perfect performance in its class, being thoroughly destitute of any pretension to soothe the resentment of criticism, or escape the scourge of exposure. We never saw a finer epitome of the laughable than the dying jerk of this lady, who made a sort of elastic spring to meet the embraces of death, and then fell backwards, as if repulsed from the bosom of her suitor. How could Mr. Harris connive at such a silly exhibition!

ANTIQUARY.

TUESDAY, *January* 25.—The Scotch Novels have been an abundant mine of wealth and splendour, to those dramatic delvers who fathomed their depths, and explored their recesses. Mr. Terry commenced the task of adaption, we believe, by his excellent opera

* Performances suspended till after his Majesty's funeral.

of "Guy Mannering," and has furnished us, in the present effort, with a fresh specimen from the same source of theatrical labour.

The piece opens with an interview between *Lovel* and *Oldbuck*, in which the Antiquary's foibles are depicted by a single but sufficient instance of the flattery in which he delights to indulge. This incident is followed by a visit from *Sir Arthur Wardour*, and his daughter, *Isabella*, between whom and *Lovel* the proofs of a tender, though clandestine correspondence, are easily discerned, which the mystery of her suitor's birth, though it urges that young lady to discourage, has not supplied her with the power of repressing. While these parties are profiting by *Oldbuck's* hospitality, a quarrel arises between *Sir Arthur* and his kind-hearted host, upon some topic of antiquity, in consequence of which, the baronet departs with his daughter, and in crossing the sands towards Wardour-castle, they are encircled by the fierce rushings of a spring-tide, and doomed to apparent destruction. From this dreadful predicament, after a pause of portentous anxiety, they are rescued by the councils of *Edie Ochiltree*, a privileged beggar, abetted by the gallantry of *Lovel*, and aided by *Oldbuck's* retainers. The scene then reverts to the Antiquary's mansion of Monkbarns, where, after the lapse of a night, *Sir Arthur* and *Isabella* are again discovered. At this juncture *Captain M'Intyre*, an impetuous Caledonian, arrives on a visit to his uncle, the Antiquary, where, in consequence of a jealous suspicion that *Isabella's* favour is awarded to *Lovel*, he insults that gentleman by a haughty distrust of his asserted identity. In consequence of this misunderstanding, a duel ensues that terminates to the disadvantage of *M'Intyre*, who is borne off, wounded, to Monkbarns, while *Lovel* embarks on board a gun-brig, to abide the issue of this perilous encounter. In the mean-time, he is discovered to be the son of *Lord Glenallan*, a peer of large property, and high character, and in consequence of the stigma being taken from his birth, he obtains the hand of *Isabella*.

The "Antiquary" has evidently been written for the grand incident with which its opening act is concluded, and we are responsible for no sally of exaggerated praise, in stating that the mechanical dexterity with which the storm and the tide are depicted, is enough to guarantee the success of a much weaker production. The music is not entitled to particular praise, though selected with appropriate taste, and performed with equivalent precision. Mr. Bishop has done so much for every musical piece with which his great talents have been connected, that we cannot submit, when the public enjoyment is considered, to his assuming the mere duties of a judicious selector.

One pleasing testimony to the success of this opera is already seen in the number and fashion of its auditors, a circumstance which will continue, we trust, to prevail against the quackery, arrogance, and conceit of a rival institution.

[For remainder of Inquisition, see page 67.]